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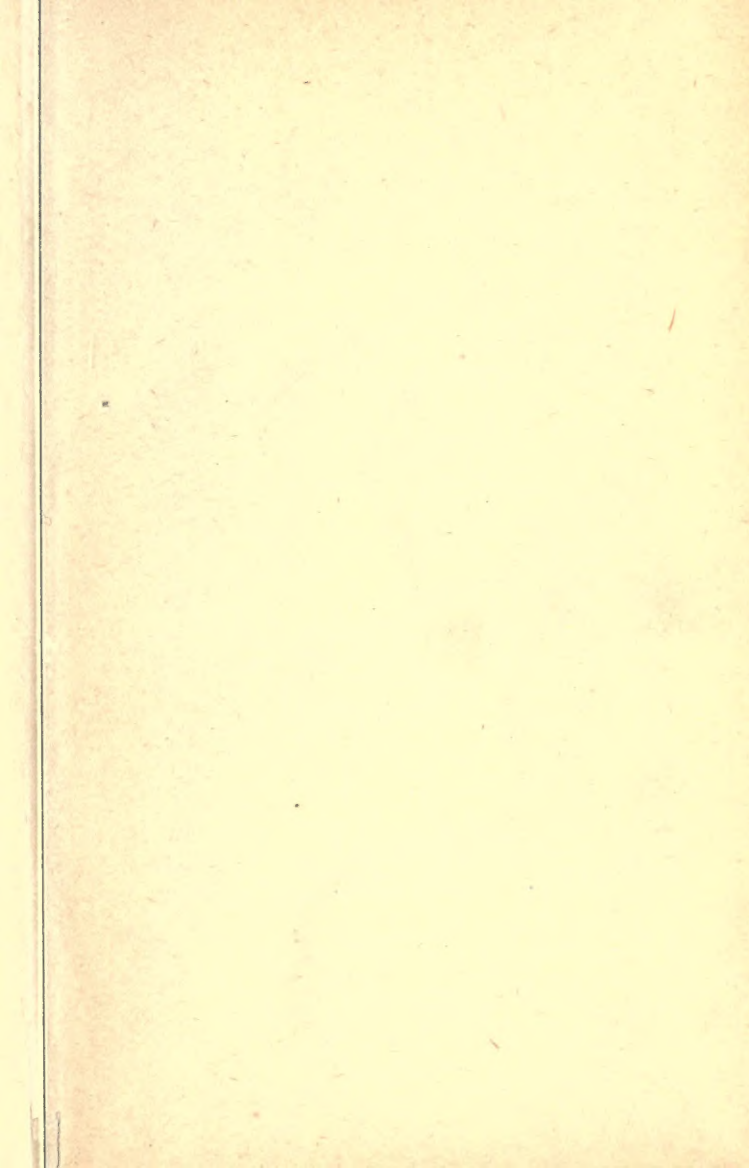
[Jno. J. Thompson.]

Posthumous
Gift of
John J. Thompson
to

Don Adams
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Too late he feels, by look, and deed, and word,
How often he has crucified his Lord.

The Wandering Jew, Vol. 1.

THE
Wandering Jew

Le Juif errant

BY
EUGENE SUE

CONTAINING THE DORE ILLUSTRATIONS

In Five Volumes—Volume One

PETER FENELON COLLIER, PUBLISHER
NEW YORK

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CONTAINING THE DATE INSTALLATIONS

IN THE BALANCE-BOOKS OF THE

REVENUE DEPARTMENT OF THE

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

VOLUME ONE.

1. Since thou art pitiless, thy weary way
Thou'rt doom'd to wander till the Judgment Day.
2. Spellbound they gather, far and near to scan
The weird senescence of that wondrous man.
3. Too late he feels, by look, and deed, and word,
How often he has crucified his Lord.
4. In vain they offer wine, with drunken jest;
He may not enter for a moment's rest.
5. On through morass and slough he strives to fly
From hateful memories of days gone by.
6. The end releases other men from strife;
His fate is ceaseless toil and deathless life.

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THE WANDERING JEW.

PART FIRST.

THE TRANSGRESSION.

PROLOGUE.

THE LAND'S END OF TWO WORLDS.

THE Arctic Ocean encircles with a belt of eternal ice the desert confines of Siberia and North America—the uttermost limits of the Old and New worlds, separated by the narrow channel known as Behring's Straits.

The last days of September have arrived.

The equinox has brought with it dark-

ness and Northern storms, and night will quickly close the short and dismal polar day. The sky of a dull and leaden blue is faintly lighted by a sun without warmth, whose white disk, scarcely seen above the horizon, pales before the dazzling brilliancy of the snow that covers, as far as the eyes can reach, the boundless *steppes*.

To the North, this desert is bounded by a ragged coast, bristling with huge black rocks.

At the base of this Titanic mass lies enchained the petrified ocean, whose spell-bound waves appear fixed as vast ranges of ice mountains, their blue peaks fading away in the far-off frost smoke, or snow vapor.

Between the twin-peaks of Cape East, the termination of Siberia, the sullen sea is seen to drive tall icebergs across a streak of dead green. There lie Behring's Straits.

Opposite, and towering over the channel, rise the granite masses of Cape Prince of Wales, the headland of North America.

These lonely latitudes do not belong to the habitable world ; for the piercing cold shivers the stones, splits the trees, and

causes the earth to burst asunder, which, throwing forth showers of icy spangles, seems capable of enduring this solitude of frost and tempest, of famine and death.

And yet, strange to say, footprints may be traced on the snow, covering these headlands on either side of Behring's Straits.

On the American shore the footprints are small and light, thus betraying the passage of a woman.

She has been hastening up the rocky peak, whence the drifts of Siberia are visible.

On the latter ground, footprints larger and deeper betoken the passing of a man. He also was on his way to the Straits.

It would seem that this man and woman had arrived here from opposite directions, in hope of catching a glimpse of one another across the arm of the sea dividing the two worlds—the Old and the New.

More strange still! the man and the woman have crossed the solitudes during a terrific storm! Black pines, the growth of centuries, pointing their bent heads in different parts of the solitude like crosses in a churchyard, have been uprooted, rent, and hurled aside by the blasts

Yet the two travelers face this furious tempest, which has plucked up trees, and pounded the frozen masses into splinters, with the roar of thunder.

They face it, without for one single instant deviating from the straight line hitherto followed by them.

Who, then, are these two beings who advance thus calmly amid the storms and convulsions of nature?

Is it by chance, or design, or destiny, that the seven nails in the sole of the man's shoe form a cross—thus:



Everywhere he leaves this impress behind him.

On the smooth and polished snow these footmarks seem imprinted by a foot of brass on a marble floor.

Night without twilight has soon succeeded day—a night of foreboding gloom.

The brilliant reflection of the snow renders the white steppes still visible beneath the azure darkness of the sky; and the pale stars glimmer on the obscure and frozen dome.

Solemn silence reigns.

But, toward the Straits, a faint light appears.

At first, a gentle, bluish light, such as precedes moonrise ; it increases in brightness, and assumes a ruddy hue.

Darkness thickens in every other direction ; the white wilds of the desert are now scarcely visible under the black vault of the firmament.

Strange and confused noises are heard amid this obscurity.

They sound like the flight of large night-birds—now flapping—now heavily skimming over the steppes—now descending.

But no cry is heard.

This silent terror heralds the approach of one of those imposing phenomena that awe alike the most ferocious and the most harmless of animated beings. An Aurora Borealis (magnificent sight !), common in the polar regions, suddenly beams forth.

A half circle of dazzling whiteness becomes visible in the horizon. Immense columns of light stream forth from this dazzling center, rising to a great height, illuminating earth, sea, and sky. Then a brilliant reflection, like the blaze of a conflagration, steals over the snow of the desert, purples the summits of the mountains of ice, and imparts a dark red hue to the black rocks of both continents.

After attaining this magnificent brilliancy, the Northern Lights faded away gradually, and their vivid glow was lost in a luminous fog.

Just then, by a wondrous mirage, an effect very common in high latitudes, the American Coast, though separated from Siberia by a broad arm of the sea, loomed so close that a bridge might seemingly be thrown from one world to the other.

Then human forms appeared in the transparent azure haze overspreading both forelands.

On the Siberian Cape, a man, on his knees, stretched his arms toward America, with an expression of inconceivable despair.

On the American promontory, a young and handsome woman replied to the man's despairing gesture by pointing to heaven.

For some seconds, these two tall figures stood out, pale and shadowy, in the farewell gleams of the Aurora.

But the fog thickens, and all is lost in darkness.

Whence came the two beings who met thus amid polar glaciers, at the extremities of the old and new worlds?

Who were the two creatures, brought near for a moment by a deceitful mirage, but who seemed eternally separated?

CHAPTER I.

MOROK.

THE month of October, 1831, draws to its close.

Though it is still day, a brass lamp, with four burners, illumines the cracked walls of a large loft, whose solitary window is closed against outer light. A ladder, with its top rungs coming up through an open trap, leads to it.

Here and there at random on the floor lie iron chains, spiked collars, saw-toothed snaffles, muzzles bristling with nails, and long iron rods set in wooden handles. In one corner stands a portable furnace, such as tinkers use to melt their spelter; charcoal and dry chips fill it, so that a spark would suffice to kindle this furnace in a minute.

Not far from this collection of ugly instruments, putting one in mind of a torturer's kit of tools, there are some articles of defense and offense of a bygone age. A coat of mail, with links so flexible, close, and light, that it resembled steel tissue, hangs from a box, beside

iron cuishes and arm-pieces, in good condition, even to being properly fitted with straps. A mace, and two long three-corner-headed pikes, with ash handles, strong, and light at the same time, spotted with lately-shed blood, complete the armory, modernized somewhat by the presence of two Tyrolese rifles, loaded and primed.

Along with this arsenal of murderous weapons and out-of-date instruments is strangely mingled a collection of very different objects, being small glass-lidded boxes, full of rosaries, chaplets, medals, AGNUS DEI, holy-water bottles, framed pictures of saints, etc., not to forget a goodly number of those chap-books, struck off in Friburg on coarse bluish paper, in which you can hear about miracles of our own time, or "Jesus Christ's Letter to a true believer," containing awful predictions, as for the years 1831 and '32, about impious revolutionary France.

One of those canvas daubs, with which strolling showmen adorn their booths, hangs from a rafter, no doubt to prevent its being spoiled by too long rolling up. It bore the following legend :

"THE DOWNRIGHT TRUE AND MOST MEMORABLE CONVERSION OF IGNATIUS MOROK, KNOWN AS THE PROPHE'T, HAP-

PENING IN FRIBURG, 1828TH YEAR OF GRACE."

This picture, of a size larger than natural, of gaudy color, and in bad taste, is divided into three parts, each presenting an important phase in the life of the convert, surnamed "The Prophet." In the first, behold a long-bearded man, the hair almost white, with uncouth face, and clad in reindeer skin, like the Siberian savage. His black foreskin cap is topped with a raven's head; his features express terror. Bent forward in his sledge, which half-a-dozen huge tawny dogs draw over the snow, he is fleeing from the pursuit of a pack of foxes, wolves, and big bears, whose gaping jaws and formidable teeth seem quite capable of devouring man, sledge, and dogs, a hundred times over. Beneath this section, read :

"IN 1810, MOROK, THE IDOLATER, FLED FROM WILD BEASTS."

In the second picture, Morok, decently clad in a catechumen's white gown, kneels, with clasped hands, to a man who wears a white neckcloth and flowing black robe. In a corner, a tall angel, of repulsive aspect, holds a trumpet in one hand, and flourishes a flaming sword with the other, while the words which follow flow out

of his mouth, in red letters on a black ground :

“MOROK, THE IDOLATER, FLED FROM WILD BEASTS ; BUT WILD BEASTS WILL FLEE FROM IGNATIUS MOROK, CONVERTED AND BAPTIZED IN FRIBURG.”

Thus, in the last compartment, the new convert proudly, boastfully, and triumphantly parades himself in a flowing robe of blue ; head up, left arm akimbo, right hand outstretched, he seems to scare the wits out of a multitude of lions, tigers, hyenas, and bears, who, with sheathed claws and masked teeth, crouch at his feet, awe-stricken and submissive.

Under this is the concluding moral :

“IGNATIUS MOROK BEING CONVERTED, WILD BEASTS CROUCH BEFORE HIM.”

Not far from this canvas are several parcels of halfpenny books, likewise from the Friburg press, which relate by what astounding miracle Morok, the Idolater, acquired a supernatural power almost divine, the moment he was converted—a power which the wildest animal could not resist, and which was testified to every day by the lion-tamer’s performances, “given less to display his courage than to show his praise unto the Lord.”

Through the trap-door which opens into the loft reek up puffs of a rank, sour,

penetrating odor. From time to time are heard sonorous growls and deep breathings, followed by a dull sound, as of great bodies stretching themselves heavily along the floor.

A man is alone in this loft. It is Morok, the tamer of wild beasts, surnamed the Prophet.

He is forty years old, of middle height, with lank limbs, and an exceedingly spare frame; he is wrapped in a long, blood-red pelisse, lined with black fur; his complexion, fair by nature, is bronzed by the wandering life he has led from childhood; his hair, of that dead yellow peculiar to certain races of the polar countries, falls straight and stiff down his shoulders; and his thin, sharp, hooked nose, and prominent cheek-bones, surmount a long beard, bleached almost to whiteness. Peculiarly marking the physiognomy of this man is the wide open eye, with its tawny pupil ever encircled by a rim of white. This fixed, extraordinary look, exercises a real fascination over animals—which, however, does not prevent the Prophet from also employing, to tame them, the terrible arsenal around him.

Seated at a table, he has just opened the false bottom of a box, filled with chaplets and other toys, for the use of the

devout. Beneath this false bottom, secured by a secret lock, are several sealed envelopes, with no other address than a number, combined with a letter of the alphabet. The Prophet takes one of these packets, conceals it in the pocket of his pelisse, and, closing the secret fastening of the false bottom, replaces the box upon a shelf.

This scene occurs about four o'clock in the afternoon, in the White Falcon, the only hostelry in the little village of Mockern, situated near Leipsic, as you come from the north toward France.

After a few moments the loft is shaken by a hoarse roaring from below.

"*Judas!* be quiet!" exclaims the Prophet, in a menacing tone, as he turns his head toward the trap-door. Another deep growl is heard, formidable as distant thunder.

"Lie down, *Cain!*" cries Morok, starting from his seat.

A third roar, of inexpressible ferocity, bursts suddenly on the ear.

"*Death!* will you have done?" cries the Prophet, rushing toward the trap-door, and addressing a third invisible animal, which bears this ghastly name.

Notwithstanding the habitual authority of his voice—notwithstanding his reiter-

ated threats—the brute-tamer cannot obtain silence; on the contrary, the barking of several dogs is soon added to the roaring of the wild beasts. Morok seizes a pike, and approaches the ladder; he is about to descend, when he sees some one issuing from the aperture.

The new comer has a brown, sun-burnt face; he wears a gray hat, bell-crowned and broad-brimmed, with a short jacket, and wide trousers of green cloth; his dusty leathern gaiters show that he has walked some distance; a game-bag is fastened by straps to his back.

“The devil take the brutes!” cried he, as he set foot on the floor; “one would think they’d forgotten me in three days. Judas thrust his paw through the bars of his cage, and Death danced like a fury. They don’t know me any more, it seems!”

This was said in German. Morok answered in the same language, but with a slightly foreign accent.

“Good or bad news, Karl?” he inquired, with some uneasiness.

“Good news.”

“You’ve met them!”

“Yesterday; two leagues from Wittenberg.”

“Heaven be praised!” cried Morok,

clasping his hands with intense satisfaction.

"Oh, of course, 'tis the direct road from Russia to France; 'twas a thousand to one that we should find them somewhere between Wittenberg and Leipsic."

"And the description?"

"Very close: two young girls in mourning; horse, white; the old man has long mustache, blue forage-cap, gray top-coat, and a Siberian dog at his heels."

"And where did you leave them?"

"A league hence. They will be here within the hour."

"And in this inn—since it is the only one in the village," said Morok, with a pensive air.

"And night drawing on," added Karl.

"Did you get the old man to talk?"

"Him!—you don't suppose it!"

"Why not?"

"Go, and try yourself."

"And for what reason?"

"Impossible."

"Impossible—why?"

"You shall know all about it. Yesterday, as if I had fallen in with them by chance, I followed them to the place where they stopped for the night. I spoke in German to the tall old man, accosting him, as is usual with wayfarers, 'Good

day, and a pleasant journey, comrade!' But, for an answer, he looked askant at me, and pointed with the end of his stick to the other side of the road."

"He is a Frenchman, and, perhaps, does not understand German."

"He speaks it, at least, as well as you; for at the inn I heard him ask the host for whatever he and the young girls wanted."

"And did you not again attempt to engage him in conversation?"

"Once only; but I met with such a rough reception, that, for fear of making mischief, I did not try again. Besides, between ourselves, I can tell you this man has a devilish ugly look; believe me, in spite of his gray mustache, he looks so vigorous and resolute, though with no more flesh on him than a carcass, that I don't know whether he or my mate, Giant Goliath, would have the best of it in a struggle. I know not your plans; only take care, master—take care!"

"My black panther of Java was also very vigorous and very vicious," said Morok, with a grim, disdainful smile.

"What, Death? Yes, in truth; and she is vigorous and vicious as ever. Only to you she is almost mild."

"And thus I will break in this tall old

man, notwithstanding his strength and surliness."

"Humph ! humph ! be on your guard, master. You are clever : you are as brave as any one ; but, believe me, you will never make a lamb out of the old wolf that will be here presently."

"Does not my lion, Cain—does not my tiger, Judas, crouch in terror before me ?"

"Yes, I believe you there—but because you have means—"

"Because I have *faith* : that is all—and it *is* all," said Morok, imperiously interrupting Karl, and accompanying these words with such a look that the other hung his head and was silent.

"Why should not he whom the Lord upholds in his struggle with wild beasts be also upheld in his struggle with men, when those men are perverse and impious ?" added the Prophet, with a triumphant, inspired air.

Whether from belief in his master's conviction, or from inability to engage in a controversy with him on so delicate a subject, Karl answered the Prophet, humbly : "You are wiser than I am, master ; what you do must be well done."

"Did you follow this old man and these two young girls all day long ?" resumed the Prophet, after a moment's silence.

“Yes ; but at a distance. As I know the country well, I sometimes cut across a valley, sometimes over a hill, keeping my eye upon the road, where they were always to be seen. The last time I saw them, I was hid behind the water-mill by the potteries. As they were on the highway for this place, and night was drawing on, I quickened my pace to get here before them, and be the bearer of what you call good news.”

“Very good—yes—very good : and you shall be rewarded ; for if these people had escaped me—”

The Prophet started, and did not conclude the sentence. The expression of his face, and the tones of his voice, indicated the importance of the intelligence which had just been brought him.

“In truth,” rejoined Karl, “it may be worth attending to ; for that Russian courier, all plastered with lace, who came, without slacking bridle, from St. Petersburg to Leipsic, only to see you, rode so fast, perhaps, for the purpose—”

Morok abruptly interrupted Karl, and said :

“Who told you that the arrival of the courier had anything to do with these travelers ? You are mistaken ; you

should only know what I choose to tell you."

"Well, master, forgive me, and let's say no more about it. So! I will get rid of my game-bag, and so help Goliath to feed the brutes, for their supper time draws near, if it is not already past. Does our big giant grow lazy, master?"

"Goliath is gone out; he must not know that you are returned; above all, the tall old man and the maidens must not see you here—it will make them suspect something."

"Where do you wish me to go, then?"

"Into the loft, at the end of the stable, and wait my orders; you may this night have to set out for Leipsic."

"As you please; I have some provisions left in my pouch, and can sup in the loft while I rest myself."

"Go."

"Master, remember what I told you. Beware of that old fellow with the gray mustache; I think he's devilish tough; I'm up to these things—he's an ugly customer—be on your guard!"

"Be quite easy! I am always on my guard," said Morok.

"Then good luck to you, master!"—and Karl, having reached the ladder, suddenly disappeared.

After making a friendly farewell to his servant, the Prophet went and down for some time, with a deep meditation; then, approaching a box which contained the paper and out a pretty long letter, and read it; and over with profound attention a short time to time, he rose and went to the closed window, which looked toward the inner court of the inn, and appeared to listen anxiously; for he waited with patience the arrival of the three persons, whose approach had just been announced to him.

CHAPTER II.

THE TRAVELERS.

WHILE the above scene was passing in the White Falcon at Mockern, the three persons whose arrival Morok was so anxiously expecting traveled on leisurely in the midst of smiling meadows, bounded on one side by a river, the current of which turned a mill; and on the other by the highway leading to the village, which was situated on an eminence, at about a league's distance.

should, y was beautifully serene ; the you.” of the river, beaten by the mill-

“ Weid sparkling with foam, alone say no in the silence of an evening pro-rid of my !m. Thick willows, bending to feed thiver, covered it with their draws nesparent shadow ; while, fur-Does our e stream reflected so splendidly

“ Goli heavens and the glowing tints know tist, that, but for the hills which the t between it and the sky, the gold and no of the water would have mingled ne dazzling sheet with the gold and zure of the firmament. The tall reeds on the bank bent their black velvet heads beneath the light breath of the breeze that rises at the close of day—for the sun was gradually sinking behind a broad streak of purple clouds, fringed with fire. The tinkling bells of a flock of sheep sounded from afar in the clear and sonor-ous air.

Along a path trodden in the grass of the meadow, two girls, almost children—for they had but just completed their fifteenth year—were riding on a white horse of medium size, seated upon a large saddle with a back to it, which easily took them both in, for their figures were slight and delicate.

A man of tall stature, with a sun-burnt

face and long gray mustache, was leading the horse by the bridle, and ever and anon turned toward the girls, with an air of solicitude at once respectful and paternal. He leaned upon a long staff; his still robust shoulders carried a soldier's knapsack; his dusty shoes, and step that began to drag a little, showed that he had walked a long way.

One of those dogs which the tribes of Northern Siberia harness to their sledges—a sturdy animal, nearly of the size, form, and hairy coat of the wolf—followed closely in the steps of the leader of this little caravan, never quitting, as it is commonly said, the heels of his master.

Nothing could be more charming than the group formed by the girls. One held with her left hand the flowing reins, and with her right encircled the waist of her sleeping sister, whose head reposed on her shoulder. Each step of the horse gave a graceful swaying to these pliant forms, and swung their little feet, which rested on a wooden ledge in lieu of a stirrup.

These twin sisters, by a sweet maternal caprice, had been called Rose and Blanche; they were now orphans, as might be seen by their sad mourning

vestments, already much worn. Extremely like in feature, and of the same size, it was necessary to be in the constant habit of seeing them to distinguish one from the other. The portrait of her who slept not, might serve then for both of them; the only difference at the moment being, that Rose was awake, and discharging for that day the duties of elder sister—duties thus divided between them, according to the fancy of their guide, who, being an old soldier of the empire, and a martinet, had judged fit thus to alternate obedience and command between the orphans.

Greuze would have been inspired by the sight of those sweet faces, coiled in close caps of black velvet, from beneath which strayed a profusion of thick ringlets of a light chestnut color, floating down their necks and shoulders, and setting, as in a frame, their round, firm, rosy, satin-like cheeks. A carnation, bathed in dew, is of no richer softness than their blooming lips; the wood violet's tender blue would appear dark beside the limpid azure of their large eyes, in which are depicted the sweetness of their characters, and the innocence of their age; a pure and white forehead, small nose, dimpled chin, complete these

graceful countenances, which present a delightful blending of candor and gentleness.

You should have seen them too, when, on the threatening of rain or storm, the old soldier carefully wrapped them both in a large pelisse of reindeer fur, and pulled over their heads the ample hood of this impervious garment; then nothing could be more lovely than those fresh and smiling little faces, sheltered beneath the dark-colored cowl.

But now the evening was fine and calm; the heavy cloak hung in folds about the knees of the sisters, and the hood rested on the back of their saddle.

Rose, still encircling with her right arm the waist of her sleeping sister, contemplated her with an expression of ineffable tenderness, akin to maternal; for Rose was the eldest for the day, and an elder sister is almost a mother.

Not only did the orphans idolize each other; but, by a psychological phenomenon, frequent with twins, they were almost always simultaneously affected; the emotion of one was reflected instantly in the countenance of the other; the same cause would make both of them start or blush, so closely did their young hearts beat in unison; all ingenuous joys, all

bitter griefs, were mutually felt, and shared in a moment between them.

In their infancy, simultaneously attacked by a severe illness, like two flowers on the same stem, they had drooped, grown pale, and languished together; but together also had they again found the pure, fresh hues of health.

Need it be said, that those mysterious, indissoluble links which united the twins, could not have been broken without striking a mortal blow at the existence of the poor children?

Thus the sweet birds called love-birds, only living in pairs, as if endowed with a common life, pine, despond, and die, when parted by a barbarous hand.

The guide of the orphans, a man of about fifty-five, distinguished by his military air and gait, preserved the immortal type of the warriors of the republic and the empire—some heroic of the people, who became, in one campaign, the first soldiers in the world—to prove what the people can do, have done, and will renew, when the rulers of their choice place in them confidence, strength and their hope.

This soldier, guide of the sisters, and formerly a horse-grenadier of the Imperial Guard, had been nicknamed Dago-bert. His grave, stern countenance was

strongly marked; his long, gray, and thick mustache completely concealed his upper lip, and united with a large imperial, which almost covered his chin; his meager cheeks, brick-colored and tanned as parchment, were carefully shaven; thick eyebrows, still black, overhung and shaded his light blue eyes; gold ear-rings reached down to his white-edged military stock; his top-coat, of coarse gray cloth, was confined at the waist by a leathern belt; and a blue foraging cap, with a red tuft falling on his left shoulder, covered his bald head.

Once endowed with the strength of Hercules, and having still the heart of a lion—kind and patient, because he was courageous and strong—Dagobert, notwithstanding his rough exterior, evinced for his orphan charges an exquisite solicitude, a watchful kindness, and a tenderness almost maternal. Yes, motherly; for the heroism of affection dwells alike in the mother's heart and the soldier's.

Stoically calm, and repressing all emotion, the unchangeable coolness of Dagobert never failed him; and, though few were less given to drollery, he was now and then highly comic, by reason of the imperturbable gravity with which he did everything.

From time to time, as they journeyed on, Dagobert would turn to bestow a caress or friendly word on the good white horse upon which the orphans were mounted. Its furrowed sides and long teeth betrayed a venerable age. Two deep scars, one on the flank and the other on the chest, proved that his horse had been present in hot battles; nor was it without an act of pride that he sometimes shook his old military bridle, the brass stud of which was still adorned with an embossed eagle. His pace was regular, careful, and steady; his coat sleek, and his bulk moderate; the abundant foam which covered his bit bore witness to that health which horses acquire by the constant, but not excessive, labor of a long journey, performed by short stages. Although he had been more than six months on the road, this excellent animal carried the orphans, with a tolerably heavy portman-teau fastened to the saddle, as freely as on the day they started.

If we have spoken of the excessive length of the horse's teeth—the unquestionable evidence of great age—it is chiefly because he often displayed them, for the sole purpose of acting up to his name (he was called *Jovial*), by playing a mis-

chievous trick, of which the dog was the victim.

This latter, who, doubtless, for the sake of contrast, was called Spoilsport (*Rabat-joie*), being always at his master's heels, found himself within the reach of Jovial, who from time to time nipped him delicately by the nape of the neck, lifted him from the ground, and carried him thus for a moment. The dog, protected by his thick coat, and no doubt long accustomed to the practical jokes of his companion, submitted to all this with stoical complacency; save that, when he thought the jest had lasted long enough, he would turn his head and growl. Jovial understood him at the first hint, and hastened to set him down again. At other times, just to avoid monotony, Jovial would gently bite the knapsack of the soldier, who seemed, as well as the dog, to be perfectly accustomed to his pleasantries.

These details will give a notion of the excellent understanding that existed between the twin sisters, the older soldier, the horse, and the dog.

The little caravan proceeded on its way, anxious to reach, before night, the village of Mockern, which was now visible on the summit of a hill. Ever and anon, Dago-bert looked around him, and seemed to be

gathering up old recollections; by aegrees, his countenance became clouded, and when he was at a little distance from the mill, the noise of which had arrested his attention, he stopped, and drew his long mustache several times between his finger and thumb, the only sign which revealed in him any strong and concentrated feeling.

Jovial having stopped short behind his master, Blanche, awaked suddenly by the shock, raised her head; her first look sought her sister, on whom she smiled sweetly; then both exchanged glances of surprise, on seeing Dagobert motionless, with his hands clasped and resting on his long staff, apparently affected by some painful and deep emotion.

The orphans just chanced to be at the foot of a little mound, the summit of which was buried in the thick foliage of a huge oak, planted half way down the slope. Perceiving that Dagobert continued motionless and absorbed in thought, Rose leaned over her saddle, and, placing her little white hand on the shoulder of their guide, whose back was turned toward her, said to him, in a soft voice: "Whatever is the matter with you, Dagobert?"

The veteran turned; to the great astonishment of the sisters, they perceived

a large tear, which traced its humid furrow down his tanned cheek, and lost itself in his thick mustache.

“ You weeping—*you !* ” cried Rose and Blanche together, deeply moved. “ Tell us, we beseech, what is the matter ? ”

After a moment's hesitation, the soldier brushed his horny hand across his eyes, and said to the orphans in a faltering voice, while he pointed to the old oak beside them : “ I shall make you sad, my poor children ; and yet what I'm going to tell you has something sacred in it. Well, eighteen years ago, on the eve of the great battle of Leipsic, I carried your father to this very tree. He had two saber-cuts on the head, a musket-ball in his shoulder ; and it was here that he and I—who had got two thrusts of a lance for my share—were taken prisoners ; and by whom, worse luck ?—why, a renegade ! By a Frenchman—an *emigrant* marquis, then colonel in the service of Russia—and who afterward—but one day you shall know all.”

The veteran paused ; then, pointing with his staff to the village of Mockern, he added : “ Yes, yes, I can recognize the spot. Yonder are the heights where your brave father—who commanded us and the Poles of the Guard—overthrew the Rus-

sian Cuirassiers, after having carried the battery. Ah, my children!" continued the soldier, with the utmost simplicity, "I wish you had seen your brave father, at the head of our brigade of horse, rushing on in a desperate charge in the thick of a shower of shells!—there was nothing like it—not a soul so grand as he!"

While Dagobert thus expressed, in his own way, his regrets and recollections, the two orphans—by a spontaneous movement, glided gently from the horse, and holding each other by the hand, went together to kneel at the foot of the old oak. And there, closely pressed in each other's arms, they began to weep; while the soldier, standing behind them, with his hands crossed on his long staff, rested his bald front upon it.

"Come, come, you must not fret," said he softly, when, after a pause of a few minutes, he saw tears run down the blooming cheeks of Rose and Blanche, still on their knees. "Perhaps we may find General Simon in Paris," added he; "I will explain all that to you this evening at the inn. I purposely waited for this day, to tell you many things about your father; it was an idea of mine, because this day is a sort of anniversary."

"We weep because we think also of our mother," said Rose.

"Of our mother, whom we shall only see again in heaven," added Blanche.

The soldier raised the orphans, took each by the hand, and gazing from one to the other with ineffable affection, rendered still the more touching by the contrast of his rude features, "You must not give way thus, my children," said he; "it is true your mother was the best of women. When she lived in Poland, they called her the *Pearl of Warsaw*—it ought to have been the Pearl of the Whole World—for in the whole world you could not have found her match. No—no!"

The voice of Dagobert faltered; he paused, and drew his long gray mustache between his finger and thumb, as was his habit. "Listen, my girls," he resumed, when he had mastered his emotion; "your mother could give you none but the best advice, eh?"

"Yes, Dagobert."

"Well, what instructions did she give you before she died? To think often of her, but without grieving?"

"It is true; she told us that our Father in heaven, always good to poor mothers whose children are left on earth, would permit her to hear us from above," said Blanche.

“And that her eyes would be ever fixed upon us,” added Rose.

And the two by a spontaneous impulse, replete with the most touching grace, joined hands, raised their innocent looks to heaven, and exclaimed, with that beautiful faith natural to their age: “Is it not so, mother?—thou seest us?—thou hearest us?”

“Since your mother sees and hears you,” said Dagobert, much moved, “do not grieve her by fretting. She forbade you to do so.”

“You are right, Dagobert. We will not cry any more.”—And the orphans dried their eyes.

Dagobert, in the opinion of the devout, would have passed for a very heathen. In Spain, he had found pleasure in cutting down those monks of all orders and colors, who, bearing the crucifix in one hand, and poniard in the other, fought *not* for liberty—the Inquisition had strangled *her* centuries ago—but for their monstrous privileges. Yet, in forty years, Dagobert had witnessed so many sublime and awful scenes—he had been so many times face to face with death—that the instinct of *natural religion*, common to every simple, honest heart, had always remained uppermost in his soul. There-

fore, though he did not share in the consoling faith of the two sisters, he would have held as criminal any attempt to weaken its influence.

Seeing them less downcast, he thus resumed : " That's right, my pretty ones: I prefer to hear you chat as you did this morning and yesterday — laughing at times, and answering me when I speak, instead of being so much engrossed with your own talk. Yes, yes, my little ladies! you seem to have had famous secrets together these last two days—so much the better, if it amuses you."

The sisters colored, and exchanged a subdued smile, which contrasted with the tears that yet filled their eyes, and Rose said to the soldier, with a little embarrassment : " No, I assure you, Dagobert, we talk of nothing in particular."

" Well, well, I don't wish to know it. Come, rest yourselves a few moments more, and then we must start again ; for it grows late, and we have to reach Mockern before night, so that we may be early on the road to-morrow."

" Have we still a long, long way to go?" asked Rose.

" What, to reach Paris? Yes, my children; some hundred days' march. We don't travel quick, but we get on; and we

travel cheap, because we have a light purse. A closet for you, a straw mattress and a blanket at your door for me, with Spoilsport on my feet, and a clean litter for old Jovial, these are our whole traveling expenses. I say nothing about food, because you two together don't eat more than a mouse, and I have learned in Egypt and Spain to be hungry only when it suits."

"Not forgetting that, to save still more, you do all the cooking for us, and will not even let us assist."

"And to think, good Dagobert, that you wash almost every evening at our resting place. As if it were not for us to—"

"You!" said the soldier, interrupting Blanche, "I allow you to chap your pretty little hands in soap-suds! Pooh! don't a soldier on a campaign always wash his own linen? Clumsy as you see me, I was the best washerwoman in my squadron—and what a hand at ironing! Not to make a brag of it."

"Yes, yes—you can iron well—very well."

"Only sometimes there will be a little singe," said Rose, smiling.

"Bah! when the iron is too hot. Zounds! I may bring it as near my cheek

as I please ; my skin is so tough that I don't feel the heat," said Dagobert, with imperturbable gravity.

"We are only jesting, good Dagobert."

"Then, children, if you think that I know my trade as a washerwoman, let me continue to have your custom ; it is cheaper ; and, on a journey, poor people like us should save where we can, for we must, at all events, keep enough to reach Paris. Once there, our papers and the medal you wear will do the rest—I hope so, at least."

"This medal is sacred to us ; mother gave it to us on her deathbed."

"Therefore, take care that you do not lose it : see, from time to time, that you have it safe."

"Here it is," said Blanche, as she drew from her bosom a small bronze medal, which she wore suspended from her neck by a chain of the same material. The medal bore on its faces the following inscriptions :

VICTIM	AT PARIS,
of	No. 3 Rue St. François,
L. C. D. J.	In a century and a half
Pray for me !	you will be.
—	February the 13th, 1832.
PARIS,	—
February the 13th, 1682.	PRAY FOR ME !

"What does it mean, Dagobert ?" resumed Blanche, as she examined the

mournful inscriptions. "Mother was not able to tell us."

"We will discuss all that this evening, at the place where we sleep," answered Dagobert. "It grows late: let us be moving. Put up the medal carefully, and away!—We have yet nearly an hour's march to arrive at quarters. Come, my poor pets, once more look at the mound where your brave father fell—and then—to horse! to horse!"

The orphans gave a last pious glance at the spot which had recalled to their guide such painful recollections, and, with his aid, remounted Jovial.

This venerable animal had not for one moment dreamed of moving; but, with the consummate forethought of a veteran, he had made the best use of his time, by taking from that foreign soil a large contribution of green and tender grass, before the somewhat envious eyes of Spoilsport, who had comfortably established himself in the meadow, with his snout protruding between his forepaws. On the signal of departure, the dog resumed his post behind his master, and Dagobert, trying the ground with the end of his long staff, led the horse carefully along by the bridle, for the meadow was growing more and more marshy; indeed, after advanc-

ing a few steps, he was obliged to turn off to the left, in order to regain the high road.

On reaching Mockern, Dagobert asked for the least expensive inn, and was told there was only one in the village—the White Falcon.

“Let us go then to the White Falcon,” observed the soldier.

CHAPTER III.

THE ARRIVAL.

ALREADY had Morok several times opened with impatience the window shutter of the loft to look out upon the inn yard, watching for the arrival of the orphans and the soldier. Not seeing them, he began once more to walk slowly up and down, with his head bent forward, and his arms folded on his bosom, meditating on the best means to carry out the plan he had conceived. The ideas which possessed his mind, were, doubtless, of a painful character, for his countenance grew even more gloomy than usual.

Notwithstanding his ferocious appearance, he was by no means deficient in intelligence. The courage displayed in his taming exercises (which he gravely attributed to his recent conversion), a

solemn and mystical style of speech, and a hypocritical affectation of austerity, had given him a species of influence over the people he visited in his travels. Long before his conversion, as may well be supposed, Morok had been familiar with the habits of wild beasts. In fact, born in the north of Siberia, he had been, from his boyhood, one of the boldest hunters of bears and reindeer; later, in 1810, he had abandoned this profession to serve as guide to a Russian engineer, who was charged with an exploring expedition to the Polar regions. He afterward followed him to St. Petersburg, and there, after some vicissitudes of fortune, Morok became one of the imperial couriers—those iron *automata*, that the least caprice of the despot hurls in a frail sledge through the immensity of the empire, from Persia to the Frozen Sea. For these men, who travel night and day, with the rapidity of lightning, there are neither seasons nor obstacles, fatigues nor dangers; living projectiles, they must either be broken to pieces, or reach the intended mark. One may conceive the boldness, the vigor, and the resignation, of men accustomed to such a life.

It is useless to relate here by what series of singular circumstances Morok

was induced to exchange this rough pursuit for another profession, and at last to enter, as catechumen, a religious house at Friburg ; after which, being duly and properly converted, he began his nomadic excursions, with his menagerie of unknown origin.

Morok continued to walk up and down the loft. Night had come. The three persons whose arrival he so impatiently expected had not yet made their appearance. His walk became more and more nervous and irregular.

On a sudden he stopped abruptly, leaned his head toward the window, and listened. His ear was quick as a savage's.

"They are here!" he exclaimed, and his fox-like eye shone with diabolic joy. He had caught the sound of footsteps—a man's and a horse's. Hastening to the window-shutter of the loft, he opened it cautiously, and saw the two young girls on horseback, and the old soldier who served them as a guide, enter the inn-yard together.

The night had set in dark and cloudy ; a high wind made the light flicker in the lanterns which were used to receive the new guests. But the description given to Morok had been so exact that it was im-

possible to mistake them. Sure of his prey, he closed the window.

Having remained in meditation for another quarter of an hour—for the purpose, no doubt, of thoroughly digesting his projects—he leaned over the aperture from which projected the ladder, and called, “Goliath !”

“Master !” replied a hoarse voice.

“Come up to me.”

“Here I am—just come from the slaughter-house with the meat.”

The steps of the ladder creaked as an enormous head appeared on a level with the floor. The new comer, who was more than six feet high, and gifted with herculean proportions, had been well named Goliath. He was hideous. His squinting eyes were deep set beneath a low and projecting forehead ; his reddish hair and beard, thick and coarse as horse-hair, gave his features a stamp of bestial ferocity ; between his broad jaws, armed with teeth which resembled fangs, he held by one corner a piece of raw beef weighing ten or twelve pounds, finding it, no doubt, easier to carry in that fashion, while he used his hands to ascend the ladder, which bent beneath his weight.

At length the whole of this tall and huge body issued from the aperture.

Judging by his bull neck, the astonishing breadth of his chest and shoulders, and the vast bulk of his arms and legs, this giant need not have feared to wrestle single-handed with a bear. He wore an old pair of blue trousers with red stripes, faced with tanned sheep's-skin, and a vest, or rather cuirass, of thick leather, which was here and there slashed by the sharp claws of the animals.

When he was fairly on the floor, Goliath unclasped his fangs, opened his mouth, and let fall the great piece of beef, licking his blood-stained lips with greediness. Like many other mountebanks, this species of monster had begun by eating raw meat at fairs for the amusement of the public. Thence having gradually acquired a taste for this barbarous food, and uniting pleasure with profit, he engaged himself to perform the prelude to the exercises of Morok, by devouring, in the presence of the crowd, several pounds of raw flesh.

"My share and Death's are below stairs, and here are those of Cain and Judas," said Goliath, pointing to the chunk of beef. "Where is the cleaver, that I may cut it in two? No preference here—beast or man—every gullet must have its own."

Then, rolling up one of the sleeves of his vest, he exhibited a forearm hairy as the skin of a wolf, and knotted with veins as large as one's thumb.

"I say, master, where's the cleaver?" he again began, as he cast round his eyes in search of that instrument. But instead of replying to this inquiry, the Prophet put many questions to his disciple.

"Were you below when just now some new travelers arrived at the inn?"

"Yes, master; I was coming from the slaughter-house."

"Who are these travelers?"

"Two young lasses mounted on a white horse, and an old fellow with a big mustache. But the cleaver? My beasts are hungry and so am I—the cleaver?"

"Do you know where they have lodged these travelers?"

"The host took them to the far end of the court-yard."

"The building which overlooks the fields?"

"Yes, master—but the cleaver—" A burst of frightful roaring shook the loft, and interrupted Goliath.

"Hark to them!" he exclaimed; "hunger has driven the beasts wild. If I could

roar, I should do as they do. I have never seen Judas and Cain as they are to-night; they leap in their cages as if they'd knock all to pieces. As for Death, her eyes shine more than usual like candles. Poor Death!"

"So these girls are lodged in the building at the end of the court-yard," resumed Morok, without attending to the observances of Goliath.

"Yes, yes—but, in the devil's name, where is the cleaver? Since Karl went away I have to do all the work, and that makes our meals very late."

"Did the old man remain with the young girls?" asked Morok.

Goliath, amazed that, notwithstanding his importunities, his master should still appear to neglect the animals' supper, regarded the Prophet with an increase of stupid astonishment.

"Answer, you brute!"

"If I am a brute, I have a brute's strength," said Goliath, in a surly tone, "and brute against brute, I have not always come the worst off."

"I ask if the old man remained with the girls," repeated Morok.

"Well then—no!" returned the giant. "The old man, after leading his horse to the stable, asked for a tub and some wa-

ter, took his stand under the porch—and there—by the light of a lantern—he is washing out clothes. A man with a gray mustache! paddling in soapsuds like a washerwoman—it's as if I were to feed canaries!" added Goliath, shrugging his shoulders with disdain. "But now I've answered you, master, let me attend to the beasts' supper"—and, looking round for something, he added, "where is the cleaver?"

After a moment of thoughtful silence, the Prophet said to Goliath, "You will give no food to the beasts this evening."

At first the giant could not understand these words, the idea was so incomprehensible to him.

"What is your pleasure, master?" said he.

"I forbid you to give any food to the beasts this evening."

Goliath did not answer, but he opened wide his squinting eyes, folded his hands, and drew back a couple of steps.

"Well, dost hear me?" said Morok, with impatience. "Is it plain enough?"

"Not feed? when our meat is there, and supper is already three hours after time!" cried Goliath, with ever-increasing amazement.

"Obey, and hold your tongue."

"You must wish something bad to happen this evening. Hunger makes the beasts furious—and me also."

"So much the better."

"It'll drive 'em mad."

"So much the better!"

"How, so much the better? But—"

"It is enough!"

"But, devil take me, I am as hungry as the beasts!"

"Eat then—who prevents it? Your supper is ready, as you devour it raw."

"I never eat without my beasts, nor they without me."

"I tell you again, that, if you dare give any food to the beasts—I will turn you away."

Goliath uttered a low growl as hoarse as a bear's, and looked at the Prophet with a mixture of anger and stupefaction.

Morok, having given his orders, walked up and down the loft appearing to reflect. Then, addressing himself to Goliath, who was still plunged in deep perplexity, he said to him:

"Do you remember the burgomaster's, where I went to get my passport signed?—to-day his wife bought some books and a chaplet."

"Yes," answered the giant, shortly.

“Go and ask his servant if I may be sure to find the burgomaster early to-morrow morning.”

“What for?”

“I may, perhaps, have something important to communicate; at all events say that I beg him not to leave home without seeing me.”

“Good! but may I not feed the beasts before I go to the burgomaster’s? only the panther, who is most hungry? Come, master; only poor Death? just a little morsel to satisfy her; Cain and I and Judas can wait.”

“It is the panther, above all, that I forbid you to feed. Yes, her above all the rest.”

“By the horns of the devil!” cried Goliath, “what is the matter with you to-day? I can make nothing of it. It is a pity that Karl’s not here; he, being cunning, would help me to understand why you prevent the beasts from eating when they are hungry.”

“You have no need to understand it.”

“Will not Karl soon come back?”

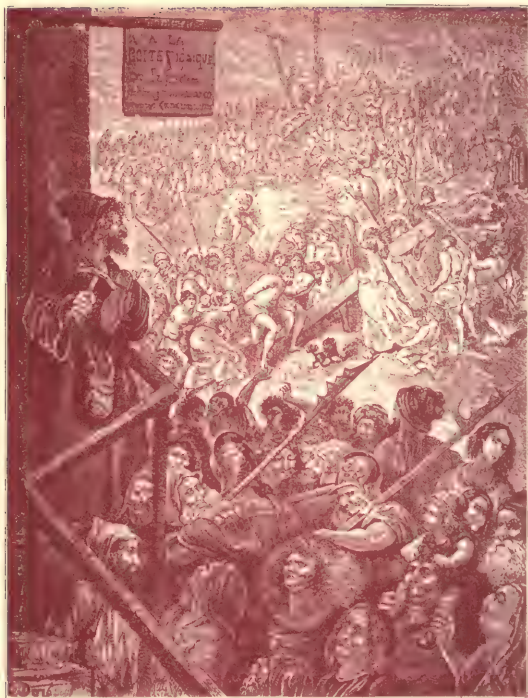
“He has already come back.”

“Where is he, then?”

“Off again.”

“What can be going on here? There





Since thou art pitiless, thy weary way
Thou'rt doom'd to wander till the Judgment Day.
The Wandering Jew, Vol. 1.

is something in the wind. Karl goes and returns, and goes again, and—”

“We are not talking of Karl, but of you; though hungry as a wolf you are cunning as a fox, and, when it suits you, as cunning as Karl.” And, changing on the sudden his tone and manner, Morok slapped the giant cordially on the shoulder.

“What! am I cunning?”

“The proof is, that there are ten florins to earn to-night—and you will be keen enough to earn them, I am sure.”

“Why, on those terms, yes—I am awake,” said the giant, smiling with a stupid, self-satisfied air. “What must I do for ten florins?”

“You shall see.”

“Is it hard work?”

“You shall see. Begin by going to the burgomaster’s—but first light the fire in that stove.” He pointed to it with his finger.

“Yes, master,” said Goliath, somewhat consoled for the delay of his supper by the hope of gaining ten florins.

“Put that iron bar in the stove,” added the Prophet, “to make it red-hot.”

“Yes, master.”

“You will leave it there; go to the burgomaster’s, and return here to wait for me.”

“Yes, master.”

“You will keep the fire up in the stove.”

“Yes, master.”

Morok took a step away, but, recollecting himself, he resumed :

“You say the old man is busy washing under the porch ? ”

“Yes, master.”

“Forget nothing : the iron bar in the fire—the burgomaster—and return here to wait my orders.” So saying, Morok descended by the trap-door and disappeared.

CHAPTER IV.

MOROK AND DAGOBERT.

GOLIATH had not been mistaken, for Dagobert was washing with that imperturbable gravity with which he did everything else.

When we remember the habits of a soldier a-field, we need not be astonished at this apparent eccentricity. Dagobert only thought of sparing the scanty purse of the orphans, and of saving them all care and trouble ; so every evening when they came to a halt he devoted himself to all sorts of feminine occupations. But he was not now serving his apprenticeship in these matters ; many times, during his

campaigns, he had industriously repaired the damage and disorder which a day of battle always brings to the garments of the soldier; for it is not enough to receive a saber-cut—the soldier has also to mend his uniform; for the stroke which grazes the skin makes likewise a corresponding fissure in the cloth.

Therefore, in the evening or on the morrow of a hard-fought engagement, you will see the best soldiers (always distinguished by their fine military appearance) take from their cartridge-box or knapsack a housewife, furnished with needles, thread, scissors, buttons, and other such gear, and apply themselves to all kinds of mending and darning, with a zeal that the most industrious workwoman might envy.

We could not find a better opportunity to explain the name of Dagobert, given to Francis Baudoin (the guide of the orphans) at a time when he was considered one of the handsomest and bravest horse grenadiers of the Imperial Guard.

They had been fighting hard all day, without any decisive advantage. In the evening, the company to which our hero belonged was sent as outliers to occupy the ruins of a deserted village. Vedettes

being posted, half the troopers remained in saddle, while the others, having picketed their horses, were able to take a little rest. Our hero had charged valiantly that day without receiving any wound—for he counted as a mere memento the deep scratch on his thigh which a kaiserlitz had inflicted in awkwardly attempting an upward thrust with the bayonet.

“You donkey : my new breeches !” the grenadier had exclaimed, when he saw the wide yawning rent, which he instantly avenged by running the Austrian through with a thrust scientifically administered. For if he showed a stoical indifference on the subject of injury to his skin, it was not so with regard to the ripping up of his best parade uniform.

He undertook, therefore, the same evening, at the bivouac, to repair this accident. Selecting his best needle and thread from the stores of his housewife, and arming his finger with a thimble, he began to play the tailor by the light of the watch-fire, having first drawn off his cavalry-boots, and also (if it must be confessed) the injured garment itself, which he turned the wrong side out the better to conceal the stitches.

This partial undress was certainly a breach of discipline : but the captain, as

he went his round, could not forbear laughing at the sight of the veteran soldier, who, gravely seated, in a squatting position, with his grenadier cap on, his regimental coat on his back, his boots by his side, and his galligaskins in his lap, was sewing with all the coolness of a tailor upon his own shop-board.

Suddenly, a musket-shot is heard, and the vedettes fall back upon the detachment, calling to arms. "To horse!" cries the captain, in a voice of thunder.

In a moment, the troopers are in their saddles, the unfortunate clothes-mender having to lead the first rank: there is no time to turn the unlucky garment, so he slips it on, as well as he can, wrong side out, and leaps upon his horse, without even stopping to put on his boots.

A party of Cossacks, profiting by the cover of a neighboring wood, had attempted to surprise the detachment: the fight was bloody, and our hero foamed with rage, for he set much value on his equipments, and the day had been fatal to him. Thinking of his torn clothes and lost boots, he hacked away with more fury than ever; a bright moon illumined the scene of action, and his comrades were able to appreciate the brilliant valor of our grenadier, who killed two Cossacks,

and took an officer prisoner, with his own hand.

After this skirmish, in which the detachment had maintained its position, the captain drew up his men to compliment them on their success, and ordered the clothes-mender to advance from the ranks, that he might thank him publicly for his gallant behavior. Our hero could have dispensed with this ovation, but he was not the less obliged to obey. Judge of the surprise of both captain and troopers, when they saw this tall and stern-looking figure ride forward at a slow pace, with his naked feet in the stirrups, and naked legs pressing the sides of his charger.

The captain drew near in astonishment; but recalling the occupation of the soldier at the moment when the alarm was given, he understood the whole mystery. "Ha, my old comrade!" he exclaimed, "thou art like King Dagobert—wearing thy breeches inside out."

In spite of discipline, this joke of the captain's was received with peals of ill-repressed laughter. But our friend, sitting upright in his saddle, with his left thumb pressing the well-adjusted reins, and his sword-hilt carried close to his right thigh, made a half-wheel, and returned to his place in the ranks without

changing countenance, after he had duly received the congratulations of his captain. From that day, Francis Baudoin received and kept the nickname of Dagobert.

Now Dagobert was under the porch of the inn, occupied in washing, to the great amazement of sundry beer-drinkers, who observed him with curious eyes from the large common room in which they were assembled.

In truth, it was a curious spectacle. Dagobert had laid aside his gray top-coat, and rolled up the sleeves of his shirt; with a vigorous hand, and good supply of soap, he was rubbing away at a wet handkerchief, spread out on the board, the end of which rested in a tub full of water. Upon his right arm, tattooed with warlike emblems in red and blue colors, two scars, deep enough to admit the finger, were distinctly visible. No wonder, then, that, while smoking their pipes, and emptying their pots of beer, the Germans should display some surprise at the singular occupation of this tall, mustached, bald-headed old man, with the forbidding countenance—for the features of Dagobert assumed a harsh and grim expression when he was no longer in presence of the two girls.

The sustained attention, of which he saw

himself the object, began to put him out of patience, for his employment appeared to him quite natural. At this moment, the Prophet entered the porch, and, perceiving the soldier, eyed him attentively for several seconds; then approaching, he said to him in French, in a rather sly tone: "It would seem, comrade, that you have not much confidence in the washerwomen of Mockern?"

Dagobert, without discontinuing his work, half turned his head with a frown, looked askant at the Prophet, and made him no answer.

Astonished at this silence, Morok resumed: "If I do not deceive myself, you are French, my fine fellow. The words on your arm prove it, and your military air stamps you as an old soldier of the empire. Therefore I find, that, for a hero, you have taken rather late to wear petticoats."

Dagobert remained mute, but he gnawed his mustache, and plied the soap, with which he was rubbing the linen, in a most hurried, not to say angry, style; for the face and words of the beast-tamer displeased him more than he cared to show. Far from being discouraged, the Prophet continued: "I am sure, my fine fellow, that you are neither deaf nor dumb; why, then, will you not answer me?"

Losing all patience, Dagobert turned abruptly round, looked Morok full in the face, and said to him, in a rough voice : “ I don’t know you : I don’t wish to know you ! Chain up your curb ! ” And he betook himself again to his washing.

“ But we may make acquaintance. We can drink a glass of Rhine wine together, and talk of our campaigns. I also have seen some service, I assure you ; and that, perhaps, will induce you to be more civil ”

The veins on the bald forehead of Dagobert swelled perceptibly ; he saw in the look and accent of the man, who thus obstinately addressed him, something designedly provoking ; still he contained himself.

“ I ask you, why should you not drink a glass of wine with me—we could talk about France. I lived there a long time ; it is a fine country ; and when I meet Frenchmen abroad, I feel sociable—particularly when they know how to use the soap as well as you do. If I had a housewife I’d send her to your school.”

The sarcastic meaning was no longer disguised ; impudence and bravado were legible in the Prophet’s looks. Thinking that, with such an adversary, the dispute might become serious, Dagobert, who wished to avoid a quarrel at any price,

carried off his tub to the other end of the porch, hoping thus to put an end to the scene which was a sore trial of his temper. A flash of joy lighted up the tawny eyes of the brute-tamer. The white circle which surrounded the pupil seemed to dilate. He ran his crooked fingers two or three times through his yellow beard, in token of satisfaction; then he advanced slowly toward the soldier, accompanied by several idlers from the common-room.

Notwithstanding his coolness, Dago-bert, amazed and incensed at the impudent pertinacity of the Prophet, was at first disposed to break the washing-board on his head; but, remembering the orphans, he thought better of it.

Folding his arms upon his breast, Morok said to him, in a dry and insolent tone: "It is very certain you are not civil, my man of suds!" Then, turning to the spectators, he continued in German: "I tell this Frenchman, with his long mustache, that he is not civil. We shall see what answer he'll make. Perhaps it will be necessary to give him a lesson. Heaven preserve me from quarrels!" he added, with mock compunction; "but the Lord has enlightened me—I am his creature, and I ought to make his work respected."

The mystical effrontery of this peroration was quite to the taste of the idlers : the fame of the Prophet had reached Mockern, and, as a performance was expected on the morrow, this prelude much amused the company. On hearing the insults of his adversary, Dagobert could not help saying in the German language : “ I know German. Speak in German—the rest will understand you.”

New spectators now arrived and joined the first comers ; the adventure had become exciting, and a ring was formed around the two persons most concerned.

The Prophet resumed in German : “ I said that you were not civil, and I now say you are grossly rude. What do you answer to that ? ”

“ Nothing ! ” said Dagobert, coldly, as he proceeded to rinse out another piece of linen.

“ Nothing ! ” returned Morok ; “ that is, very little. I will be less brief, and tell you, that, when an honest man offers a glass of wine civilly to a stranger, that stranger has no right to answer with insolence, and deserves to be taught manners if he does so.”

Great drops of sweat ran down Dagobert’s forehead and cheeks, his large imperial was incessantly agitated by nervous

trembling — but he restrained himself. Taking, by two of the corners, the handkerchief which he had just dipped in the water, he shook it, wrung it, and began to hum to himself the burden of the old camp ditty :

“ Out of Tirlemont's flea-haunted den,
We ride forth next day of the sen,
With saber in hand, ah !
Good-by to Amanda,” etc.

The silence to which Dagobert had condemned himself almost choked him ; this song afforded him some relief.

Morok, turning toward the spectators, said to them, with an air of hypocritical restraint : “ We knew that the soldiers of Napoleon were pagans, who stabled their horses in churches, and offended the Lord a hundred times a day, and who, for their sins, were justly drowned in the Beresina like so many Pharaohs ; but we did not know that the Lord, to punish these miscreants, had deprived them of courage—their single gift. Here is a man, who has insulted, in me, a creature favored by divine grace, and who affects not to understand that I require an apology ; or else—”

“ What ? ” said Dagobert, without looking at the Prophet.

“ Or you must give me satisfaction !—I

have already told you that I have seen service. We shall easily find somewhere a couple of swords, and to-morrow morning, at peep of day, we can meet behind a wall, and show the color of our blood—that is, if you have any in your veins.?”

This challenge began to frighten the spectators, who were not prepared for so tragical a conclusion.

“What, fight?—a very fine idea!” said one. “To get yourselves both locked up in prison: the laws against dueling are strict.”

“Particularly with relation to strangers or nondescripts,” added another. “If they were to find you with arms in your hands, the burgomaster would shut you up in jail, and keep you there two or three months before the trial.”

“Would you be so mean as to denounce us?” asked Morok.

“No, certainly not,” cried several; “do as you like. We are only giving you a friendly piece of advice, by which you may profit, if you think fit.”

“What care I for prison?” exclaimed the Prophet. “Only give me a couple of swords, and you shall see to-morrow morning if I heed what the burgomaster can do or say.”

“What would you do with two

swords?" asked Dagobert, quietly.

"When you have one in your grasp, and I one in mine, you'd see. The Lord commands us to have a care of his honor!"

Dagobert shrugged his shoulders, made a bundle of his linen in his handkerchief, dried his soap, and put it carefully into a little oil-silk bag—then, whistling his favorite air of Tirlemont, moved to depart.

The Prophet frowned; he began to fear that his challenge would not be accepted. He advanced a step or so to encounter Dagobert, placed himself before him, as if to intercept his passage, and, folding his arms, and scanning him from head to foot with bitter insolence, said to him: "So! an old soldier of that arch-robber, Napoleon, is only fit for a washerwoman, and refuses to fight!"

"Yes, he refuses to fight," answered Dagobert, in a firm voice, but becoming fearfully pale. Never, perhaps, had the soldier given to his orphan charge such a proof of tenderness and devotion. For a man of his character to let himself be insulted with impunity, and refuse to fight—the sacrifice was immense!

"So you are a coward—you are afraid of me—and you confess it?"

At these words Dagobert made, as it were, a pull upon himself—as if a sudden thought had restrained him the moment he was about to rush on the Prophet. Indeed, he had remembered the two maidens, and the fatal hinderance which a duel, whatever might be the result, would occasion to their journey. But the impulse of anger, though rapid, had been so significant—the expression of the stern, pale face, bathed in sweat, was so daunting, that the Prophet and the spectators drew back a step.

Profound silence reigned for some seconds, and then, by a sudden reaction, Dagobert seemed to have gained the general interest. One of the company said to those near him: "This man is clearly not a coward."

"Oh, no! certainly not."

"It sometimes requires more courage to refuse a challenge than to accept one."

"After all, the Prophet was wrong to pick a quarrel about nothing—and with a stranger, too."

"Yes, for a stranger, if he fought and was taken up, would have a good long imprisonment."

"And then, you see," added another, "he travels with two young girls. In such a position, ought a man to fight

about trifles? If he should be killed or put in prison, what would become of them, poor children?"

Dagobert turned toward the person who had pronounced these last words. He saw a stout fellow, with a frank and simple countenance; the soldier offered him his hand, and said with emotion:

"Thank you, sir."

The German shook cordially the hand which Dagobert had proffered, and, holding it still in his own, he added: "Do one thing, sir—share a bowl of punch with us. We will make that mischief-making Prophet acknowledge that he has been too touchy, and he shall drink to your health."

Up to this moment the brute-tamer, enraged at the issue of this scene, for he had hoped that the soldier would accept his challenge, looked on with savage contempt at those who had thus sided against him. But now his features gradually relaxed; and, believing it useful to his projects to hide his disappointment, he walked up to the soldier, and said to him, with a tolerably good grace: "Well, I give way to these gentlemen. I own I was wrong. Your frigid air had wounded me, and I was not master of myself. I repeat, that I was wrong,"

he added, with suppressed vexation ;
“the Lord commands humility—and—I
beg your pardon.”

This proof of moderation and regret
was highly appreciated and loudly ap-
plauded by the spectators. “He asks
your pardon ; you cannot expect more,
my brave fellow !” said one of them, ad-
dressing Dagobert. “Come, let us all
drink together ; we make you this offer
frankly—accept it in the same spirit.”

“Yes, yes, accept it, we beg you, in
the name of your pretty little girls,”
said the stout man, hoping to decide
Dagobert by this argument.

“Many thanks, gentlemen,” replied
he, touched by the hearty advances of
the Germans ; “you are very worthy
people. But, when one is treated, he
must offer drink in return.”

“Well, we will accept it—that’s under-
stood. Each his turn, and all fair. We
will pay for the first bowl, you for the
second.”

“Poverty is no crime,” answered Dago-
bert ; “and I must tell you honestly that
I cannot afford to pay for drink. We
have still a long journey to go, and I
must not incur any useless expenses.”

The soldier spoke these words with such
firm, but simple dignity, that the Ger-

mans did not venture to renew their offer, feeling that a man of Dagobert's character could not accept it without humiliation.

"Well, so much the worse," said the stout man. "I should have liked to clink glasses with you. Good-night, my brave trooper!—good-night—for it grows late, and mine host of the Falcon will soon turn us out of doors."

"Good-night, gentlemen," replied Dagobert, as he directed his steps toward the stable to give his horse a second allowance of provender.

Morok approached him, and said in a voice even more humble than before: "I have acknowledged my error, and asked your pardon. You have not answered me, do you still bear malice?"

"If ever I meet you," said the veteran, in a suppressed and hollow tone, "when my children have no longer need of me, I will just say two words to you, and they will not be long ones."

Then he turned his back abruptly on the Prophet, who walked slowly out of the yard.

The inn of the White Falcon formed a parallelogram. At one end rose the principal dwelling; at the other was a range of buildings which contained sundry chambers, let at a low price to the poorer sort

of travelers ; a vaulted passage opened a way through this latter into the country ; finally, on either side of the court-yard were sheds and stables, with lofts and garrets erected over them.

Dagobert, entering one of these stables, took from off a chest the portion of oats destined for his horse, and, pouring it into a winnowing basket, shook it as he approached Jovial.

To his great astonishment, his old traveling companion did not respond with a joyous neigh to the rustle of the oats rattling on the wicker-work. Alarmed, he called Jovial with a friendly voice, but the animal, instead of turning toward his master a look of intelligence, and impatiently striking the ground with his forefeet, remained perfectly motionless.

More and more surprised, the soldier went up to him. By the dubious light of a stable-lantern he saw the poor animal in an attitude which implied terror—his legs half bent, his head stretched forward, his ears down, his nostrils quivering ; he had drawn tight his halter, as if he wished to break it, in order to get away from the partition that supported his rack and manger ; abundant cold-sweat had speckled his hide with bluish stains, and his coat altogether looked dull

and bristling, instead of standing out sleek and glossy from the dark background of the stable; lastly, from time to time, his body shook with convulsive starts.

“Why, old Jovial!” said the soldier, as he put down the basket, in order to soothe his horse with more freedom, “you are like thy master—afraid!—Yes,” he added with bitterness, as he thought of the offense he had himself endured, “you are afraid—though no coward in general.”

Notwithstanding the caresses and the voice of his master, the horse continued to give signs of terror; he pulled somewhat less violently at his halter, and approaching his nostrils to the hand of Dagobert, sniffed audibly, as if he doubted it were he.

“You don’t know me!” cried Dagobert. “Something extraordinary must be passing here.”

The soldier looked around him with uneasiness. It was a large stable, faintly lighted by the lantern suspended from the roof, which was covered with innumerable cobwebs; at the further end, separated from Jovial by some stalls with bars between, were the three strong, black horses of the brute-tamer—as tranquil as Jovial was frightened.

Dagobert, struck with this singular contrast, of which he was soon to have the

explanation, again caressed his horse ; and the animal, gradually reassured by his master's presence, licked his hands, rubbed his head against him, uttered a low neigh, and gave him his usual tokens of affection.

"Come, come, this is how I like to see my old Jovial !" said Dagobert, as he took up the winnowing-basket, and poured its contents into the manger. "Now eat with a good appetite, for we have a long day's march to-morrow ; and, above all, no more of these foolish fears about nothing ! If thy comrade, Spoilsport, was here, he would keep you in heart ; but he is along with the children, and takes care of them in my absence. Come, eat ! instead of staring at me in that way."

But the horse, having just touched the oats with his mouth, as if in obedience to his master, returned to them no more, and began to nibble at the sleeve of Dagobert's coat.

"Come, come, my poor Jovial ! there is something the matter with you. You have generally such a good appetite, and now you leave your corn. 'Tis the first time this has happened since our departure," said the soldier, who was now growing seriously uneasy, for the issue

of his journey greatly depended on the health and vigor of his horse.

Just then a frightful roaring, so near that it seemed to come from the stable in which they were, gave so violent a shock to Jovial, that with one effort he broke his halter, leaped over the bar that marked his place, and, rushing at the open door, escaped into the court-yard.

Dagobert had himself started at the suddenness of this wild and fearful sound, which at once explained to him the cause of his horse's terror. The adjoining stable was occupied by the itinerant menagerie of the brute-tamer, and was only separated by the partition which supported the mangers. The three horses of the Prophet, accustomed to these howlings, had remained perfectly quiet.

"Good!" said the soldier, recovering himself; "I understand it now. Jovial has heard another such roar before, and he can scent the animals of that insolent scoundrel. It is enough to frighten him," added he, as he carefully collected the oats from the manger; "once in another stable, and there must be others in this place, he will no longer leave his peck, and we shall be able to start early to-morrow morning."

The terrified horse, after running and

galloping about the yard, returned at the voice of the soldier, who easily caught him by the broken halter; and a hostler, whom Dagobert asked if there was another vacant stable, having pointed out one that was only intended for a single animal, Jovial was comfortably installed there.

When delivered from his ferocious neighbors, the horse became tranquil as before, and even amused himself much at the expense of Dagobert's top-coat, which, thanks to his tricks, might have afforded immediate occupation for his master's needle, if the latter had not been fully engaged in admiring the eagerness with which Jovial dispatched his provender. Completely reassured on his account, the soldier shut the door of the stable, and proceeded to get his supper as quickly as possible, in order to rejoin the orphans, whom he reproached himself with having left so long.

CHAPTER V.

ROSE AND BLANCHE.

THE orphans occupied a dilapidated chamber in one of the most remote wings of the inn, with a single window opening upon the country. A bed without curtains, a table, and two chairs, composed the more than modest furniture of this retreat, which was now lighted by a lamp. On the table, which stood near the window, was deposited the knapsack of the soldier.

The great Siberian dog, who was lying close to the door, had already twice uttered a deep growl, and turned his head toward the window—but without giving any further effect to this hostile manifestation.

The two sisters, half recumbent in their bed, were clad in long white wrappers, buttoned at the neck and wrists. They wore no caps, but their beautiful chestnut hair was confined at the temples by a broad piece of tape, so that it might not get tangled during the night. These white garments, and the white fillet that like a halo encircled their brows, gave to



Spellbound, they gather far and near to scan
The weird senescence of that wondrous man.

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their fresh and blooming faces a still more candid expression.

The orphans laughed and chatted, for, in spite of some early sorrows, they still retained the ingenuous gayety of their age. The remembrance of their mother would sometimes make them sad, but this sorrow had in it nothing bitter; it was rather a sweet melancholy, to be sought instead of shunned. For them, this adored mother was not dead—she was only absent.

Almost as ignorant as Dagobert with regard to devotional exercises, for in the desert where they had lived there was neither church nor priest, their faith, as was already said, consisted in this—that God, just and good, had so much pity for the poor mothers whose children were left on earth, that he allowed them to look down upon them from highest heaven—to see them always, to hear them always, and sometimes to send fair guardian angels to protect them. Thanks to this guileless illusion, the orphans, persuaded that their mother incessantly watched over them, felt that to do wrong would be to afflict her, and to forfeit the protection of the good angels. This was the entire theology of Rose and Blanche—a

creed sufficient for such pure and loving souls.

Now, on the evening in question, the two sisters chatted together while waiting for Dagobert. Their theme interested them much, for, since some days, they had a secret, a great secret, which often quickened the beatings of their innocent hearts, often agitated their budding bosoms, changed to bright scarlet the roses on their cheeks, and infused a restless and dreamy languor into the soft blue of their large eyes.

Rose, this evening, occupied the edge of the couch, with her rounded arms crossed behind her head, which was half-turned toward her sister; Blanche, with her elbow resting on the bolster, looked at her smilingly, and said: "Do you think he will come again to-night?"

"Oh, yes! certainly. He promised us yesterday."

"He is so good, he would not break his promise."

"And so handsome, with his long fair curls."

"And his name—what a charming name!—how well it suits his face."

"And what a sweet smile and soft voice, when he says to us, taking us by the hand: 'My children, bless God that

he has given you one soul. What others seek elsewhere, you will find in yourselves.' ”

“ ‘Since your two hearts,’ he added, ‘only make one.’ ”

“ What pleasure to remember his words, sister ! ”

“ We are so attentive ! When I see you listening to him it is as if I saw myself, my dear little mirror ! ” said Rose, laughing, and kissing her sister’s forehead.

“ Well—when he speaks, your—or rather *our* eyes—are wide, wide open, our lips moving as if we repeated every word after him. It is no wonder we forget nothing that he says.”

“ And what he says is so grand, so noble, and generous.”

“ Then, my sister, as he goes on talking, what good thoughts rise within us ! If we could but always keep them in mind.”

“ Do not be afraid ! they will remain in our hearts, like little birds in their mother’s nest.”

“ And how lucky it is, Rose, that he loves us both at the same time ! ”

“ He could not do otherwise, since we have but one heart between us.”

“ How could he love Rose, without loving Blanche ? ”

“What would have become of the poor neglected one?”

“And then again he would have found it so difficult to choose.”

“We are so much like one another.”

“So, to save himself that trouble,” said Rose, laughing, “he has chosen us both.”

“And is it not the best way? He is alone to love us; we are two together to think of him. Only he must not leave us till we reach Paris.”

“And in Paris, too—we must see him there also.”

“Oh, above all at Paris; it will be good to have him with us—and Dagobert, too—in that great city. Only think, Blanche, how beautiful it must be.”

“Paris!—it must be like a city all of gold.”

“A city where every one must be happy, since it is so beautiful.”

“But ought we, poor orphans, dare so much as to enter it? How people will look at us!”

“Yes—but every one there is happy, every one must be good also.”

“They will love us.”

“And, besides, we shall be with our friend with the fair hair and blue eyes.”

“He has yet told us nothing of Paris.”

“He has not thought of it; we must

“speak to him about it this very night.”

“If he is in the mood for talking. Often, you know, he likes best to gaze on us in silence—his eyes on our eyes.”

“Yes. In those moments, his look recalls to me the gaze of our dear mother.”

“And, as she sees it all, how pleased she must be at what has happened to us!”

“Because, when we are so much beloved, we must, I hope, deserve it.”

“See what a vain thing it is!” said Blanche, smoothing with her slender fingers the parting of the hair on her sister’s forehead.

After a moment’s reflection, Rose said to her: “Don’t you think we should relate all this to Dagobert?”

“If you think so, let us do it.”

“We tell him everything, as we told everything to mother. Why should we conceal this from him?”

“Especially as it is something which gives us so much pleasure.”

“Do you not find that, since we have known our friend, our hearts beat quicker and stronger?”

“Yes, they seem to be more full.”

“The reason why is plain enough; our friend fills up a good space in them.”

“Well, we will do best to tell Dagobert what a lucky star ours is.”

"You are right—" At this moment the dog gave another deep growl.

"Sister," said Rose, as she pressed closer to Blanche, "there is the dog growling again. What can be the matter with him?"

"Spoilsport, do not growl! Come hither," said Blanche, striking with her little hand on the side of the bed.

The dog rose, again growled deeply, and came to lay his great, intelligent-looking head on the counterpane, still obstinately casting a sidelong glance at the window; the sisters bent over him to pat his broad forehead, in the center of which was a remarkable bump, the certain sign of extreme purity of race.

"What makes you growl so, Spoilsport?" said Blanche, pulling him gently by the ears—"eh, my good dog?"

"Poor beast! he is always so uneasy when Dagobert is away."

"It is true; one would think he knows that he then has a double charge over us."

"Sister, it seems to me Dagobert is late in coming to say good-night."

"No doubt he is attending to Jovial."

"That makes me think that we did not bid good-night to dear old Jovial."

"I am sorry for it."

“Poor beast ! he seems so glad when he licks our hands. One would think that he thanked us for our visit.”

“Luckily, Dagobert will have wished him good-night for us.”

“Good Dagobert ! he is always thinking of us. How he spoils us ! We remain idle, and he has all the trouble.”

“How can we prevent it ? ”

“What a pity that we are not rich, to give him a little rest.”

“We rich ! Alas, my sister ! we shall never be anything but poor orphans.”

“Oh, there’s the medal ! ”

“Doubtless, there is some hope attached to it, else we should not have made this long journey.”

“Dagobert has promised to tell us all, this evening.”

She was prevented from continuing, for two of the window-panes flew to pieces with a loud crash.

The orphans, with a cry of terror, threw themselves into each other’s arms, while the dog rushed toward the window, barking furiously.

Pale, trembling, motionless with affright, clasping each other in a close embrace, the two sisters held their breath ; in their extreme fear they durst not even cast their eyes in the direction of the win-

dow. The dog, with his forepaws resting on the sill, continued to bark with violence.

“Alas! what can it be?” murmured the orphans. “And Dagobert not here!”

“Hark!” cried Rose, suddenly seizing Blanche by the arm; “hark!—some one coming up the stairs!”

“Good heaven! it does not sound like the tread of Dagobert. Do you not hear what heavy footsteps?”

“Quick! come, Spoilsport, and defend us!” cried the two sisters at once, in an agony of alarm.

The boards of the wooden staircase really creaked beneath the weight of unusually heavy footsteps, and a singular kind of rustling was heard along the thin partition that divided the chamber from the landing-place. Then a ponderous mass, falling against the door of the room, shook it violently; and the girls, at the very height of terror, looked at each other without the power to speak.

The door opened. It was Dagobert.

At the sight of him Rose and Blanche joyfully exchanged a kiss, as if they had just escaped from a great danger.

“What is the matter? why are you afraid?” asked the soldier in surprise.

“Oh, if you only knew!” said Rose,

panting as she spoke, for both her own heart and her sister's beat with violence.

"If you knew what has just happened ! We did not recognize your footsteps—they seemed so heavy—and then that noise behind the partition !"

"Little frightened doves that you are ! I could not run up the stairs like a boy of fifteen, seeing that I carried my bed upon my back—a straw mattress that I have just flung down before your door, to sleep there as usual."

"Bless me ! how foolish we must be, sister, not to have thought of that !" said Rose, looking at Blanche. And their pretty faces, which had together grown pale, together resumed their natural color.

During this scene the dog, still resting against the window, did not cease barking a moment.

"What makes Spoilsport bark in that direction, my children ?" said the soldier.

"We do not know. Two of our window-panes have just been broken. That is what first frightened us so much."

Without answering a word Dagobert flew to the window, opened it quickly, pushed back the shutter, and leaned out.

He saw nothing ; it was dark night. He listened ; but heard only the moaning of the wind.

"Spoilsport," said he to his dog, pointing to the open window, "leap out, old fellow, and search!" The faithful animal took one mighty spring and disappeared by the window, raised only about eight feet above the ground.

Dagobert, still leaning over, encouraged his dog with voice and gesture: "Search, old fellow, search! If there is any one there, pin him—your fangs are strong—and hold him fast till I come."

But Spoilsport found no one. They heard him go backward and forward, snuffing on every side, and now and then uttering a low cry like a hound at fault.

"There is no one, my good dog, that's clear, or you would have had him by the throat ere this." Then, turning to the maidens, who listened to his words and watched his movements with uneasiness: "My girls," said he, "how were these panes broken? Did you not remark?"

"No, Dagobert; we were talking together when we heard a great crash, and then the glass fell into the room."

"It seemed to me," added Rose, "as if a shutter had struck suddenly against the window."

Dagobert examined the shutter, and observed a long movable hook, designed to fasten it on the inside.

"It blows hard," said he; "the wind must have swung round the shutter, and this hook broke the window. Yes, yes; that is it. What interest could anybody have to play such a sorry trick?" Then, speaking to Spoilsport, he asked: "Well, my good fellow, is there no one?"

The dog answered by a bark, which the soldier no doubt understood as a negative, for he continued: "Well, then, come back! Make the round—you will find some door open—you are never at a loss."

The animal followed this advice. After growling for a few seconds beneath the window, he set off at a gallop to make the circuit of the buildings, and come back by the court-yard.

"Be quite easy, my children!" said the soldier, as he again drew near the orphans; "it was only the wind."

"We were a good deal frightened," said Rose.

"I believe you. But now I think of it, this draught is likely to give you cold." And seeking to remedy this inconvenience, he took from a chair the reindeer pelisse, and suspended it from the spring-catch of the curtainless window, using the skirts to stop up as closely as possible the two

openings made by the breaking of the panes.

“Thanks, Dagobert, how good you are! We were very uneasy at not seeing you.”

“Yes, you were absent longer than usual. But what is the matter with you?” added Rose, only just then perceiving that his countenance was disturbed and pallid, for he was still under the painful influence of the brawl with Morok; “how pale you are!”

“Me, my pets? Oh, nothing.”

“Yes, I assure you, your countenance is quite changed. Rose is right.”

“I tell you there is nothing the matter,” answered the soldier, not without some embarrassment, for he was little used to deceive; till, finding an excellent excuse for his emotion, he added: “If I do look at all uncomfortable, it is your fright that has made me so, for indeed it was my fault.”

“Your fault!”

“Yes; for if I had not lost so much time at supper, I should have been here when the window was broken, and have spared you the fright.”

“Anyhow, you are here now, and we think no more of it.”

“Why don’t you sit down?”

"I will, my children, for we have to talk together," said Dagobert, as he drew a chair close to the head of the bed. "Now tell me, are you quite awake?" he added, trying to smile in order to reassure them. "Are those large eyes properly open?"

"Look, Dagobert!" cried the two girls, smiling in their turn, and opening their blue eyes to the utmost extent.

"Well, well," said the soldier; "they are yet far enough from shutting; besides, it is only nine o'clock."

"We also have something to tell, Dagobert," resumed Rose, after exchanging glances with her sister.

"Indeed!"

"A secret to tell you."

"A secret?"

"Yes, to be sure."—"Ah, and a very great secret!" added Rose, quite seriously.

"A secret which concerns us both," resumed Blanche.

"Faith! I should think so. What concerns the one always concerns the other. Are you not always, as the saying goes, 'two faces under one hood'?"

"Truly, how can it be otherwise, when you put our heads under the great hood of your pelisse?" said Rose, laughing.

“There they are again, mocking-birds. One never has the last word with them. Come, ladies, your secret, since a secret there is.”

“Speak, sister,” said Rose.

“No, miss, it is for you to speak. You are to-day on duty, as eldest, and such an important thing as telling a secret like that you talk of belongs of right to the elder sister. Come, I am listening to you,” added the soldier, as he forced a smile, the better to conceal from the maidens how much he still felt the unpunished affronts of the brute-tamer.

It was Rose (who, as Dagobert said, was doing duty as eldest) that spoke for herself and for her sister.

CHAPTER VI.

THE SECRET.

“FIRST of all, good Dagobert,” said Rose, in a gracefully caressing manner, “as we are going to tell our secret—you must promise not to scold us.”

“You will not scold your darlings, will you?” added Blanche, in a no less coaxing voice.

“Granted!” replied Dagobert, gravely; “particularly as I should not well know how to set about it—but why should I scold you?”

"Because we ought perhaps to have told you sooner what we are going to tell you."

"Listen, my children," said Dagobert sententiously, after reflecting a moment on this case of conscience; "one of two things must be. Either you were right, or else you were wrong to hide this from me; if you were right, very well; if you were wrong, it is done: so let's say no more about it. Go on—I am all attention."

Completely reassured by this luminous decision, Rose resumed, while she exchanged a smile with her sister: "Only think, Dagobert; for two successive nights we have had a visitor."

"A visitor!" cried the soldier, drawing himself up suddenly in his chair.

"Yes, a charming visitor—he is so very fair."

"Fair!—the devil!" cried Dagobert, with a start.

"Yes, fair—and with blue eyes," added Blanche.

"Blue eyes—blue devils!" and Dagobert again bounded on his seat.

"Yes, blue eyes—as long as that," resumed Rose, placing the tip of one forefinger about the middle of the other.

"Zounds! they might belong as that," said the veteran, indicating the whole

length of his arm from the elbow—"they might be as long as that, and it would have nothing to do with it. Fair, and with blue eyes. Pray what may this mean, young ladies?" and Dagobert rose from his seat with a severe and painfully unquiet look.

"There now, Dagobert, you have begun to scold us already!"

"Just at the very commencement," added Blanche.

"Commencement!—what, is there to be a sequel? a finish?"

"A finish? we hope not," said Rose, laughing like mad.

"All we ask is, that it should last forever," added Blanche, sharing in the hilarity of her sister.

Dagobert looked gravely from one to the other of the two maidens, as if trying to guess this enigma; but when he saw their sweet, innocent faces gracefully animated by a frank, ingenuous laugh, he reflected that they would not be so gay if they had any serious matter for self-reproach, and he felt pleased at seeing them so merry in the midst of their precarious position.

"Laugh on, my children!" he said. "I like so much to see you laugh."

Then, thinking that was not precisely

the way in which he ought to treat the singular confession of the young girls, he added in a gruff voice: "Yes, I like to see you laugh—but not when you receive fair visitors with blue eyes, young ladies! Come, acknowledge that I'm an old fool to listen to such nonsense—you are only making game of me."

"Nay, what we tell you is quite true."

"You know we never tell stories," added Rose.

"They are right—they never fib," said the soldier, in renewed perplexity. "But how the devil is such a visit possible? I sleep before your door—Spoilsport sleeps under your window—and all the blue eyes and fair locks in the world must come in by one of those two ways—and, if they had tried it, the dog and I, who have both of us quick ears, would have received their visits after our fashion. But come, children! pray, speak to the purpose. Explain yourselves!"

The two sisters, who saw by the expression of Dagobert's countenance that he felt really uneasy, determined no longer to trifle with his kindness. They exchanged a glance, and Rose, taking in her little hand the coarse, broad palm of the veteran, said to him: "Come, do not plague yourself! We will tell you all

about the visit of our friend Gabriel."

"There you are again! He has a name, then?"

"Certainly, he has a name. It is Gabriel."

"Is it not a pretty name, Dagobert? Oh, you will see and love, as we do, our beautiful Gabriel!"

"I'll love your beautiful Gabriel, will I?" said the veteran, shaking his head—
"Love your beautiful Gabriel?—that's as it may be. I must first know—" Then, interrupting himself, he added: "It is queer. That reminds me of something."

"Of what, Dagobert?"

"Fifteen years ago, in the last letter that your father, on his return from France, brought me from my wife, she told me that, poor as she was, and with our little growing Agricola on her hands, she had taken in a poor deserted child, with the face of a cherub, and the name of Gabriel—and only a short time since I heard of him again."

"And from whom, then?"

"You shall know that by and by."

"Well, then—since you have a Gabriel of your own—there is the more reason that you should love ours."

"Yours! but who is yours? I am on thorns till you tell me."

"You know, Dagobert," resumed Rose, "that Blanche and I are accustomed to fall asleep, holding each other by the hand."

"Yes, yes, I have often seen you in your cradle. I was never tired of looking at you: it was so pretty."

"Well, then—two nights ago, we had just fallen asleep, when we beheld—"

"Oh, it was in a dream!" cried Dagobert. "Since you were asleep, it was in a dream!"

"Certainly, in a dream—how else would you have it?"

"Pray let my sister go on with her tale!"

"Ah, well and good!" said the soldier with a sigh of satisfaction; "well and good! To be sure, I was tranquil enough in any case—because—but still—I like it better to be a dream. Continue, my little Rose."

"Once asleep, we both dreamed the same thing."

"What! both the same?"

"Yes, Dagobert; for the next morning when we awoke we related our two dreams to each other."

"And they were exactly alike."

"That's odd enough, my children; and what was this dream all about?"

“In our dream Blanche and I were seated together, when we saw enter a beautiful angel, with a long white robe, fair locks, blue eyes, and so handsome and benign a countenance that we clasped our hands as if to pray to him. Then he told us, in a soft voice, that he was called Gabriel; that our mother had sent him to be our guardian angel, and that he would never abandon us.”

“And then,” added Blanche, “he took us each by the hand, and, bending his fair face over us, looked at us for a long time in silence, with so much goodness—with so much goodness, that we could not withdraw our eyes from his.”

“Yes,” resumed Rose, “and his look seemed, by turns, to attract us, or to go to our hearts. At length, to our great sorrow, Gabriel quitted us, having told us that we should see him again the following night.”

“And did he make his appearance?”

“Certainly. Judge with what impatience we waited the moment of sleep, to see if our friend would return, and visit us in our slumbers.”

“Humph!” said Dagobert, scratching his forehead; “this reminds me, young ladies, that you kept on rubbing your eyes last evening, and pretending to be half

asleep. I wager, it was all to send me away the sooner and to get to your dream as fast as possible."

"Yes, Dagobert."

"The reason being, you could not say to me, as you would to Spoilsport: 'Lie down, Dagobert!' Well—so your friend Gabriel came back?"

"Yes, and this time he talked to us a great deal, and gave us, in the name of our mother, such touching, such noble counsels, that the next day, Rose and I spent our whole time in recalling every word of our guardian angel—and his face, and his look—"

"This reminds me again, young ladies, that you were whispering all along the road this morning; and that when I spoke of white, you answered black."

"Yes, Dagobert, we were thinking of Gabriel."

"And, ever since, we love him as well as he loves us."

"But he is only one between both of you!"

"Was not our mother one between us?"

"And you, Dagobert—are you not also one for us both?"

"True, true! And yet, do you know,

I shall finish by being jealous of that Gabriel ! ”

“ You are our friend by day—he is our friend by night.”

“ Let’s understand it clearly. If you talk of him all day, and dream of him all night, what will there remain for me ? ”

“ There will remain for you your two orphans, whom you love so much,” said Rose.

“ And who have only you left upon earth,” added Blanche, in a caressing tone.

“ Humph ! humph ! that’s right, coax the old man over ! Nay, believe me, my children,” added the soldier tenderly, “ I am quite satisfied with my lot. I can afford to let you have your Gabriel. I felt sure that Spoilsport and myself could take our rest in quiet. After all, there is nothing so astonishing in what you tell me ; your first dream struck your fancy, and you talked so much about it that you had a second ; nor should I be surprised if you were to see this fine fellow a third time.”

“ Oh, Dagobert ! do not make a jest of it ! They are only dreams, but we think our mother sends them to us. Did she not tell us that orphan children were watched over by guardian angels ? Well, Gabriel is our guardian angel ; he will protect us, and he will protect you also.”

“Very kind of him to think of me; but you see, my dear children, for the matter of defense, I prefer the dog; he is less fair than your angel, but he has better teeth, and that is more to be depended on.”

“How provoking you are, Dagobert—always jesting!”

“It is true; you can laugh at everything.”

“Yes, I am astonishingly gay; I laugh with my teeth shut, in the style of old Jovial. Come, children, don’t scold me: I know I am wrong. The remembrance of your dear mother is mixed with this dream, and you do well to speak of it seriously. Besides,” added he, with a grave air, “dreams will sometimes come true. In Spain, two of the Empress’s dragoons, comrades of mine, dreamed, the night before their death, that they would be poisoned by the monks—and so it happened. If you continue to dream of this fair angel Gabriel, it is—it is—why, it is, because you are amused by it; and, as you have none too many pleasures in the daytime, you may as well get an agreeable sleep at night. But, now, my children, I have also much to tell you; it will concern your mother; promise me not to be sad.”

“Be satisfied! when we think of her we are not sad, though serious.”

“That is well. For fear of grieving you, I have always delayed the moment of telling what your poor mother would have confided to you as soon as you were no longer children. But she died before she had time to do so, and that which I have to tell broke her heart—as it nearly did mine. I put off this communication as long as I could, taking for pretext that I would say nothing till we came to the field of battle where your father was made prisoner. That gave me time; but the moment is now come; I can shuffle it off no longer.”

“We listen, Dagobert,” responded the two maidens, with an attentive and melancholy air.

After a moment's silence, during which he appeared to reflect, the veteran thus addressed the young girls :

“Your father, General Simon, was the son of a workman, who remained a workman; for, notwithstanding all that the general could say or do, the old man was obstinate in not quitting his trade. He had a heart of gold and a head of iron, just like his son. You may suppose, my children, that when your father, who had enlisted as a private soldier, became a general and a count of the Empire, it was not without toil or without glory.”



In vain they offer wine, with drunken jest;
He may not enter for a moment's rest.

The Wandering Jew, Vol. 1.

“A count of the Empire? what is that, Dagobert?”

“Flummery—a title which the Emperor gave over and above the promotion, just for the sake of saying to the people, whom he loved because he was one of them: ‘Here, children! you wish to play at nobility! you shall be nobles. You wish to play at royalty! you shall be kings. Take what you like—nothing is too good for you—enjoy yourselves!’”

“Kings!” said the two girls, joining their hands in admiration.

“Kings of the first water. Oh, he was no niggard of his crowns, our Emperor! I had a bed-fellow of mine, a brave soldier, who was afterward promoted to be king. This flattered us; for, if it was not one, it was the other. And so, at this game, your father became count; but, count or not, he was one of the best and bravest generals of the army.”

“He was handsome, was he not, Dagobert?—mother always said so.”

“Oh, yes! indeed he was—but quite another thing from your fair guardian angel. Picture to yourself a fine, dark man, who looked splendid in his full uniform, and could put fire into the soldiers’ hearts. With him to lead, we would have charged up into heaven itself—that is, if

heaven had permitted it," added Dagobert, not wishing to wound in any way the religious beliefs of the orphans.

"And father was as good as he was brave, Dagobert?"

"Good, my children? Yes, I should say so! He could bend a horse-shoe in his hand as you would bend a card, and the day he was taken prisoner he had cut down the Prussian artillerymen on their very cannon. With strength and courage like that, how could he be otherwise than good? It is then about nineteen years ago, not far from this place—on the spot I showed you before we arrived at the village—that the general, dangerously wounded, fell from his horse. I was following him at the time, and ran to his assistance. Five minutes after we were made prisoners—and by whom, think you?—by a Frenchman."

"A Frenchman?"

"Yes, an emigrant marquis, a colonel in the service of Russia," answered Dagobert, with bitterness. "And so, when this marquis advanced toward us, and said to the general: 'Surrender, sir, to a countryman!'—'A Frenchman, who fights against France,' replied the general, 'is no longer my countryman; he is a traitor, and I'd never surrender to a traitor!'"

And, wounded though he was, he dragged himself up to a Russian grenadier, and delivered him his saber, saying : ‘ I surrender to you, my brave fellow ! ’ The marquis became pale with rage at it.”

The orphans looked at each other with pride, and a rich crimson mantled their cheeks, as they exclaimed : “ Oh, our brave father ! ”

“ Ah, those children,” said Dagobert as he proudly twirled his mustache. “ One sees they have soldier’s blood in their veins ! Well,” he continued, “ we were now prisoners. The general’s last horse had been killed under him ; and, to perform the journey, he mounted Jovial, who had not been wounded that day. We arrived at Warsaw, and there it was that the general first saw your mother. She was called the *Pearl of Warsaw* ; that is saying everything. Now he, who admired all that is good and beautiful, fell in love with her almost immediately ; and she loved him in return ; but her parents had promised her to another—and that other was the same—”

Dagobert was unable to proceed. Rose uttered a piercing cry and pointed in terror to the window.

CHAPTER VII.

THE TRAVELER.

UPON the cry of the young girl Dagobert rose abruptly.

“What is the matter, Rose?”

“There—there!” she said, pointing to the window. “I thought I saw a hand move the pelisse.”

She had not concluded these words before Dagobert rushed to the window and opened it, tearing down the mantle which had been suspended from the fastening.

It was still dark night and the wind was blowing hard. The soldier listened, but could hear nothing.

Returning to fetch the lamp from the table, he shaded the flame with his hand and strove to throw the light outside. Still he saw nothing. Persuaded that a gust of wind had disturbed and shaken the pelisse, and that Rose had been deceived by her own fears, he again shut the window.

“Be satisfied, children! The wind is very high; it is that which lifted the corner of the pelisse.”

“Yet methought I saw plainly the fin-

gers which had hold of it," said Rose, still trembling.

"I was looking at Dagobert," said Blanche, "and I saw nothing."

"There was nothing to see, my children: the thing is clear enough. The window is at least eight feet above the ground; none but a giant could reach it without a ladder. Now, had any one used a ladder, there would not have been time to remove it; for, as soon as Rose cried out, I ran to the window, and, when I held out the light, I could see nothing."

"I must have been deceived," said Rose.

"You may be sure, sister, it was only the wind," added Blanche.

"Then I beg pardon for having disturbed you, my good Dagobert."

"Never mind!" replied the soldier musingly; "I am only sorry that Spoilsport is not come back. He would have watched the window, and that would have quite tranquilized you. But he no doubt scented the stable of his comrade, Jovial, and will have called in to bid him good-night on the road. I have half a mind to go and fetch him."

"Oh, no, Dagobert! do not leave us alone," cried the maidens; "we are too much afraid."

"Well, the dog is not likely to remain

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away much longer, and I am sure we shall soon hear him scratching at the door, so we will continue our story," said Dagobert, as he again seated himself near the head of the bed, but this time with his face toward the window.

"Now the general was prisoner at Warsaw," continued he, "and in love with your mother, whom they wished to marry to another. In 1814, we learned the finish of the war, the banishment of the Emperor to the Isle of Elba, and the return of the Bourbons. In concert with the Prussians and Russians, who had brought them back, they had exiled the Emperor. Learning all this, your mother said to the general: 'The war is finished; you are free, but your Emperor is in trouble. You owe everything to him; go and join him in his misfortunes. I know not when we shall meet again, but I will never marry any one but you. I am yours till death!'—Before he set out the general called me to him, and said: 'Dagobert, remain here; Mademoiselle Eva may have need of you to fly from her family, if they should press too hard upon her; our correspondence will have to pass through your hands; at Paris I shall see your

wife and son ; I will comfort them, and tell them you are my friend.' ”

“ Always the same,” said Rose, with emotion, as she looked affectionately at Dagobert.

“ As faithful to the father and mother as to their children,” added Blanche.

“ To love one was to love them all,” replied the soldier. “ Well, the general joined the Emperor at Elba ; I remained at Warsaw, concealed in the neighborhood of your mother’s house ; I received the letters, and conveyed them to her clandestinely. In one of those letters—I feel proud to tell you of it, my children—the general informed me that the Emperor himself had remembered me.”

“ What, did he know you ? ”

“ A little, I flatter myself—‘ Oh ! Dagobert ! ’ said he to your father, who was talking to him about me ; ‘ a horse grenadier of my old guard—a soldier of Egypt and Italy, battered with wounds—an old dare-devil, whom I decorated with my own hand at Wagram—I have not forgotten him ! ’—I vow, children, when your mother read that to me, I cried like a fool.”

“ The Emperor—what a fine golden face he has on the silver cross with the red ribbon that you would some-

times show us when we behaved well !”

“That cross—given by him—is my relic. It is there in my knapsack, with whatever we have of value—our little purse and papers. But, to return to your mother ; it was a great consolation to her, when I took her letters from the general, or talked with her about him—for she suffered much—oh, so much ! In vain her parents tormented and persecuted her ; she always answered : ‘I will never marry any one but General Simon.’ A spirited woman, I can tell you—resigned, but wonderfully courageous. One day she received a letter from the general ; he had left the Isle of Elba with the Emperor ; the war had again broken out, a short campaign, but as fierce as ever, and heightened by soldiers’ devotion. In that campaign of France, my children, especially at Montmirail, your father fought like a lion, and his division followed his example. It was no longer valor—it was frenzy. He told me that, in Champagne, the peasants killed so many of those Prussians that their fields were manured with them for years. Men, women, children, all rushed upon them. Pitchforks, stones, mattocks, all served for the slaughter. It was a true wolf-hunt !”

The veins swelled on the soldier's forehead, and his cheeks flushed as he spoke, for this popular heroism recalled to his memory the sublime enthusiasm of the wars of the republic—those armed risings of a whole people, from which dated the first steps of his military career, as the triumphs of the Empire were the last days of his service.

The orphans, too, daughters of a soldier and a brave woman, did not shrink from the rough energy of these words, but felt their cheeks glow and their hearts beat tumultuously.

“How happy we are to be the children of so brave a father!” cried Blanche.

“It is a happiness and an honor, too, my children—for the evening of the battle of Montmirail, the Emperor, to the joy of the whole army, made your father Duke of Ligny and Marshal of France.”

“Marshal of France!” said Rose in astonishment, without understanding the exact meaning of the words.

“Duke of Ligny!” added Blanche, with equal surprise.

“Yes; Peter Simon, the son of a workman, became duke and marshal—there is nothing higher except a king!” resumed Dagobert, proudly. “That’s how the Emperor treated the sons of the people,

and, therefore, the people were devoted to him. It was all very fine to tell them : 'Your Emperor makes you food for cannon.' 'Stuff !' replied the people, who are no fools, 'another would make us food for misery. We prefer the cannon, with the chance of becoming captain or colonel, marshal, king—or invalid ; that's better than to perish with hunger, cold and age, on straw in a garret, after toiling forty years for others.' "

"Even in France—even in Paris, that beautiful city—do you mean to say there are poor people who die of hunger and misery, Dagobert ? "

"Even in Paris ? Yes, my children ; therefore, I come back to the point—the cannon is better. With it, one has the chance of becoming, like your father, duke and marshal : when I say duke and marshal, I am partly right and partly wrong, for the title and the rank were not recognized in the end ; because, after Montmirail, came a day of gloom, a day of great mourning, when, as the general has told me, old soldiers like myself wept—yes, wept !—on the evening of a battle. That day, my children, was Waterloo ! "

There was in these simple words of Dagobert an expression of such deep

sorrow that it thrilled the hearts of the orphans.

"Alas!" resumed the soldier, with a sigh, "there are days which seem to have a curse on them. That same day, at Waterloo, the general fell, covered with wounds, at the head of a division of the Guards. When he was nearly cured, which was not for a long time after, he solicited permission to go to St. Helena—another island at the far end of the world, to which the English had carried the Emperor, to torture him at their leisure; for if he was very fortunate in the first instance, he had to go through a deal of hard rubs at last, my poor children."

"If you talk in that way, you will make us cry, Dagobert."

"There is cause enough for it—the Emperor suffered so much! He bled cruelly at the heart, believe me. Unfortunately, the general was not with him at St. Helena; he would have been one more to console him; but they would not allow him to go. Then, exasperated, like so many others, against the Bourbons, the general engaged in a conspiracy to recall the son of the Emperor. He relied especially on one regiment, nearly all composed of his old soldiers, and he went

down to a place in Picardy, where they were then in garrison; but the conspiracy had already been divulged. Arrested the moment of his arrival, the general was taken before the colonel of the regiment. And this colonel," said the soldier, after a brief pause, "who do you think it was again? Bah! it would be too long to tell you all, and would only make you more sad; but it was a man whom your father had many reasons to hate. When he found himself face to face with him, he said: 'If you are not a coward, you will give me one hour's liberty, and we will fight to the death; I hate you for this, I despise you for that'—and so on. The colonel accepted the challenge, and gave your father his liberty till the morrow. The duel was a desperate one; the colonel was left for dead on the spot."

"Merciful heaven!"

"The general was yet wiping his sword, when a faithful friend came to him, and told him he had only just time to save himself. In fact, he happily succeeded in leaving France—yes, happily—for, a fortnight after, he was condemned to death as a conspirator."

"What misfortunes, good heaven!"

"There was some luck, however, in

the midst of his troubles. Your mother had kept her promise bravely, and was still waiting for him. She had written to him : 'The Emperor first, and me next !' Not able to do anything more for the Emperor, nor even for his son, the general, banished from France, set out for Warsaw. Your mother had lost her parents, and was now free ; they were married—and I am one of the witnesses to the marriage."

"You are right, Dagobert ; that was great happiness in the midst of great misfortunes !"

"Yes, they were very happy ; but, as it happens with all good hearts, the happier they were themselves, the more they felt for the sorrows of others—and there was quite enough to grieve them at Warsaw. The Russians had again begun to treat the Poles as their slaves ; your brave mother, though of French origin, was a Pole in heart and soul ; she spoke out boldly what others did not dare speak in a whisper, and all the unfortunate called her their protecting angel. That was enough to excite the suspicions of the Russian governor. One day, a friend of the general's, formerly a colonel in the lancers, a brave and worthy man, was condemned to be exiled

to Siberia, for a military plot against the Russians. He took refuge in your father's house, and lay hid there ; but his retreat was discovered. During the next night, a party of Cossacks, commanded by an officer and followed by a traveling-carriage, arrive at our door ; they rouse the general from his sleep, and take him away with them."

" Oh, heaven ! what did they mean to do with him ? "

" Conduct him out of the Russian dominions, with a charge never to return, on pain of perpetual imprisonment. His last words were : ' Dagobert, I intrust to thee my wife and child ! '—for it wanted yet some months of the time when you were to be born. Well, notwithstanding that, they exiled your mother to Siberia ; it was an opportunity to get rid of her ; she did too much good at Warsaw, and they feared her accordingly. Not content with banishing her, they confiscated all her property ; the only favor she could obtain was, that I should accompany her, and, had it not been for Jovial, whom the general had given to me, she would have had to make the journey on foot. It was thus, with her on horseback, and I leading her as I lead you, my children, that we arrived at the poverty-stricken

village, where, three months after, you poor little things were born ! ”

“ And our father ? ”

“ It was impossible for him to return to Russia ; impossible for your mother to think of flight, with two children ; impossible for the general to write to her, as he knew not where she was. ”

“ So, since that time, you have had no news of him ? ”

“ Yes, my children — once we had news. ”

“ And by whom ? ”

After a moment's silence, Dagobert resumed, with a singular expression of countenance : “ By whom ? — by one who is not like other men. Yes — that you may understand me better, I will relate to you an extraordinary adventure, which happened to your father during his last French campaign. He had been ordered by the Emperor to carry a battery which was playing heavily on our army ; after several unsuccessful efforts, the general put himself at the head of a regiment of cuirassiers, and charged the battery, intending, as was his custom, to cut down the men at their guns. He was on horseback, just before the mouth of a cannon, where all the artillerymen had been either killed or wounded, when one of them still

found strength to raise himself upon one knee, and to apply the lighted match to the touch-hole — and that when your father was about ten paces in front of the loaded piece.”

“Oh ! what a peril for our father ! ”

“Never, he told me, had he run such imminent danger—for he saw the artilleryman apply the match, and the gun go off—but, at the very nick, a man of tall stature, dressed as a peasant, and whom he had not before remarked, threw himself in front of the cannon.”

“Unfortunate creature ! what a horrible death ! ”

“Yes,” said Dagobert, thoughtfully ; “it should have been so. He ought by rights to have been blown into a thousand pieces. But no — nothing of the kind ! ”

“What do you tell us ? ”

“What the general told me. ‘At the moment when the gun went off,’ as he often repeated to me, ‘I shut my eyes by an involuntary movement, that I might not see the mutilated body of the poor wretch who had sacrificed himself in my place. When I again opened them, the first thing I saw in the midst of the smoke was the tall figure of this man, standing erect and calm on the same

spot, and casting a sad, mild look on the artilleryman, who, with one knee on the ground, and his body thrown backward, gazed on him with as much terror as if he had been the devil in person. Afterward, in the tumult of the battle, I lost sight of this man,' added your father."

"Bless me, Dagobert! how can this be possible?"

"That is just what I said to the general. He answered me, that he had never been able to explain to himself this event, which seemed as incredible as it was true. Moreover, your father must have been greatly struck with the countenance of this man, who appeared, he said, about thirty years of age—for he remarked that his extremely black eyebrows were joined together, and formed, as it were, one line from temple to temple, so that he seemed to have a black streak across his forehead. Remember this, my children; you will soon see why."

"Oh, Dagobert! we shall not forget it," said the orphans, becoming more and more astonished as he proceeded.

"Is it not strange—this man with a black seam on his forehead?"

"Well, you shall hear. The general had, as I told you, been left for dead at Waterloo. During the night, which he

passed on the field of battle, in a sort of delirium brought on by the fever of his wounds, he saw, or fancied he saw, this same man bending over him, with a look of great mildness and deep melancholy, stanching his wounds, and using every effort to revive him. But as your father, whose senses were still wandering, repulsed his kindness—saying, that after such a defeat, it only remained to die—it appeared as if this man replied to him : ‘ You must live for Eva ! ’—meaning your mother, whom the general had left at Warsaw, to join the Emperor, and make this campaign of France.”

“ How strange, Dagobert ! And since then, did our father never see this man ? ”

“ Yes, he saw him—for it is he who brought news of the general to your poor mother.”

“ When was that ? We never heard of it.”

“ You remember that, on the day your mother died, you went to the pine-forest with old Fedora ? ”

“ Yes,” answered Rose, mournfully ; “ to fetch some heath, of which our mother was so fond.”

“ Poor mother ! ” added Blanche ; “ she appeared so well that morning that we

could not dream of the calamity which awaited us before night."

"True, my children ; I sung and worked that morning in the garden, expecting, no more than you did, what was to happen. Well, as I was singing at my work, on a sudden I heard a voice ask me in French : 'Is this the village of Milosk ?'—I turned round, and saw before me a stranger ; I looked at him attentively, and, instead of replying, fell back two steps, quite stupefied."

"Ah, why ?"

"He was of tall stature, very pale, with a high and open forehead ; but his eyebrows met, and seemed to form one black streak across it."

"Then it was the same man who had twice been with our father in battle ?"

"Yes—it was he."

"But, Dagobert," said Rose, thoughtfully, "is it not a long time since these battles ?"

"About sixteen years."

"And of what age was this stranger ?"

"Hardly more than thirty."

"Then how can it be the same man, who, sixteen years before, had been with our father in the wars ?"

"You are right," said Dagobert, after a moment's silence, and shrugging his

shoulders : " I may have been deceived by a chance likeness—and yet—"

" Oh, if it were the same, he could not have got older all that while."

" But did you ask him if he had not formerly relieved our father ? "

" At first I was so surprised that I did not think of it ; and afterward, he remained so short a time that I had no opportunity. Well, he asked me for the village of Milosk. ' You are there, sir,' said I, ' but how do you know that I am a Frenchman ? ' ' I heard you singing as I passed,' replied he ; ' could you tell me the house of Madame Simon, the general's wife ? ' ' She lives here, sir.' Then, looking at me for some seconds in silence, he took me by the hand and said : ' You are the friend of General Simon—his best friend ! ' Judge of my astonishment, as I answered : ' But, sir, how do you know ? ' ' He has often spoken of you with gratitude.' ' You have seen the general then ? ' ' Yes, some time ago, in India. I am also his friend : I bring news of him to his wife, whom I knew to be exiled in Siberia. At Tobolsk, whence I come, I learned that she inhabits this village. Conduct me to her ! ' "

" The good traveler—I love him already," said Rose.

“Yes, being father’s friend.”

“I begged him to wait an instant while I went to inform your mother, so that the surprise might not do her harm : five minutes after, he was beside her.”

“And what kind of man was this traveler, Dagobert ? ”

“He was very tall ; he wore a dark pelisse and a fur cap, and had long black hair.”

“Was he handsome ? ”

“Yes, my children—very handsome ; but with so mild and melancholy an air that it pained my heart to see him.”

“Poor man ! he had doubtless known some great sorrow.”

“Your mother had been closeted with him for some minutes, when she called me to her and said that she had just received good news of the general. She was in tears, and had before her a large packet of papers ; it was a kind of journal, which your father had written every evening to console himself ; not being able to speak to her, he told the paper all that he would have told her.”

“Oh ! where are these papers, Dagobert ? ”

“There, in the knapsack, with my cross and our purse. One day I will give them to you ; but I have picked out a few leaves

here and there for you to read presently. You will see why."

"Had our father been long in India?"

"I gathered from the few words which your mother said, that the general had gone to that country, after fighting for the Greeks against the Turks—for he always liked to side with the weak against the strong. In India he made fierce war against the English: they had murdered our prisoners in pontoons, and tortured the Emperor at St. Helena, and the war was a doubly good one, for in harming them he served a just cause."

"What cause did he serve then?"

"That of one of the poor native princes, whose territories the English lay waste, till the day when they can take possession of them against law and right. You see, my children, it was once more the weak against the strong, and your father did not miss this opportunity. In a few months he had so well trained and disciplined the twelve or fifteen thousand men of the prince, that, in two encounters, they cut to pieces the English sent against them, and who, no doubt, had in their reckoning left out your brave father, my children. But come, you shall read some pages of his journal, which will tell you more and better than I can. Moreover,

you will find in them a name which you ought always to remember; that's why I chose this passage."

"Oh, what happiness! To read the pages written by our father is almost to hear him speak," said Rose.

"It is as if he were close beside us," added Blanche.

And the girls stretched out their hands with eagerness, to catch hold of the leaves that Dagobert had taken from his pocket. Then, by a simultaneous movement, full of touching grace, they pressed the writing of their father in silence to their lips.

"You will see also, my children, at the end of this letter, why I was surprised that your guardian angel, as you say, should be called Gabriel. Read, read," added the soldier, observing the puzzled air of the orphans. "Only I ought to tell you, that, when he wrote this, the general had not yet fallen in with the traveler who brought the papers."

Rose, sitting up in her bed, took the leaves, and began to read in a soft trembling voice; Blanche, with her head resting on her sister's shoulder, followed attentively every word. One could even see, by the slight motion of her lips, that she too was reading, but only to herself.

CHAPTER VIII.

EXTRACTS FROM GENERAL SIMON'S DIARY.

“ ‘ *Bivouac on the Mountains of Ava,*
“ ‘ *February the 20th, 1830.*

“ ‘ EACH time I add some pages to this journal, written now in the heart of India, where the fortune of my wandering and proscribed existence has thrown me—a journal which, alas ! my beloved Eva, you may never read—I experience a sweet, yet painful emotion ; for, although to converse thus with you is a consolation, it brings back the bitter thought that I am unable to see or speak to you.

“ ‘ Still, if these pages should ever meet your eyes, your generous heart will throb at the name of the intrepid being to whom I am this day indebted for my life, and to whom I may thus perhaps owe the happiness of seeing you again—you and my child—for of course our child lives. Yes, it must be—for else, poor wife, what an existence would be yours amid the horrors of exile ! Dear soul ! he must now be fourteen. Whom does he resemble ? Is he like you ? Has he your large and beautiful blue eyes ? Madman that I am ! how many times, in this long day-





On, through morass and slough, he strives to fly
From hateful memories of days gone by.

—The Wandering Jew, Vol. 1.

book, have I already asked the same idle question, to which you can return no answer ! How many times shall I continue to ask it ? But you will teach our child to speak and love the somewhat savage name of *Djalma*.' "

" *Djalma !* " said Rose, as with moist eyes she left off reading.

" *Djalma !* " repeated Blanche, who shared the emotion of her sister. " Oh, we shall never forget that name. "

" And you will do well, my children ; for it seems to be the name of a famous soldier, though a very young one. But go on, my little Rose ! "

" " I have told you in the preceding pages, my dear Eva, of the two glorious days we had this month. The troops of my old friend the prince, which daily make fresh advances in European discipline, have performed wonders. We have beaten the English, and obliged them to abandon a portion of this unhappy country, which they had invaded in contempt of all the rights of justice, and which they continue to ravage without mercy ; for, in these parts, warfare is another name for treachery, pillage, and massacre. This morning, after a toilsome march through a rocky and mountainous district, we received infor-

mation from our scouts that the enemy had been re-enforced, and was preparing to act on the offensive ; and, as we were separated from them by a distance of a few leagues only, an engagement became inevitable. My old friend the prince, the father of my deliverer, was impatient to march to the attack. The action began about three o'clock ; it was very bloody and furious. Seeing that our men wavered for a moment, for they were inferior in number, and the English re-enforcements consisted of fresh troops, I charged at the head of our weak reserve of cavalry. The old prince was in the center, fighting, as he always fights, intrepidly ; his son, Djalma, scarcely eighteen, as brave as his father, did not leave my side. In the hottest part of the engagement, my horse was killed under me, and rolling over into a ravine, along the edge of which I was riding, I found myself so awkwardly entangled beneath him that for an instant I thought my thigh was broken.' ”

“ Poor father ! ” said Blanche.

“ This time, happily, nothing more dangerous ensued—thanks to Djalma ! You see, Dagobert,” added Rose, “ that I remember the name.” And she continued to read :

“‘The English thought—and a very flattering opinion it was—that, if they could kill me, they would make short work of the prince’s army. So a Sepoy officer, with five or six irregulars—cowardly, ferocious plunderers—seeing me roll down the ravine, threw themselves into it to dispatch me. Surrounded by fire and smoke, and carried away by their ardor, our mountaineers had not seen me fall; but Djalma never left me. He leaped into the ravine to my assistance, and his cool intrepidity saved my life. He had held the fire of his double-barreled carbine; with one load he killed the officer on the spot; with the other he broke the arm of an irregular, who had already pierced my left hand with his bayonet. But do not be alarmed, dear Eva; it is nothing—only a scratch.’”

“Wounded—again wounded—alas!” cried Blanche, clasping her hands together and interrupting her sister.

“Take courage!” said Dagobert; “I dare say it was only a scratch, as the general calls it. Formerly, he used to call wounds which did not disable a man from fighting, blank wounds. There was no one like him for such sayings.”

“‘Djalma, seeing me wounded,’” resumed Rose, wiping her eyes, “‘made

use of his heavy carbine as a club, and drove back the soldiers. At that instant, I perceived a new assailant who, sheltered behind a clump of bamboos which commanded the ravine, slowly lowered his long gun, placed the barrel between two branches, and took deliberate aim at Djalma. Before my shouts could apprise him of his danger, the brave youth had received a ball in his breast. Feeling himself hit, he fell back involuntarily two paces, and dropped upon one knee; but he remained firm, endeavoring to cover me with his body. You may conceive my rage and despair, while all my efforts to disengage myself were paralyzed by the excruciating pain in my thigh. Powerless and disarmed, I witnessed for some moments this unequal struggle.

“ ‘Djalma was losing blood rapidly; his strength of arm began to fail him; already one of the irregulars, inciting his comrades with his voice, drew from his belt a huge, heavy kind of bill-hook, when a dozen of our mountaineers made their appearance, borne toward the spot by the irresistible current of the battle. Djalma was rescued in his turn, I was released, and, in a quarter of an hour, I was able to mount a horse. The fortune of the day is ours, though with severe loss; but the

fires of the English camp are still visible, and to-morrow the conflict will be decisive. Thus, my beloved Eva, I owe my life to this youth. Happily, his wound occasions us no uneasiness; the ball only glanced along the ribs in a slanting direction."

"The brave boy might have said: 'A blank wound,' like the general," observed Dagobert.

"Now, my dear Eva,'" continued Rose, "'you must become acquainted, by means of this narrative at least, with the intrepid Djalma. He is but just eighteen. With one word I will paint for you his noble and valiant nature; it is a custom of this country to give surnames, and, when only fifteen, he was called "The Generous"—by which was, of course, meant generous in heart and mind. By another custom, no less touching than whimsical, this name has reverted to his parent, who is called "The Father of the Generous," and who might, with equal propriety, be called "The Just," for this old Indian is a rare example of chivalrous honor and proud independence. He might, like so many other poor princes of this country, have humbled himself before the execrable despotism of the English, bargained for the relinquishment of sovereign power, and submitted to brute force—

but it was not in his nature. "My whole rights, or a grave in my native mountains!"—such is his motto. And this is no empty boast: it springs from the conviction of what is right and just. "But you will be crushed in the struggle," I have said to him. "My friend," he answered, "what if, to force you to a disgraceful act, you were told to yield or die?" From that day I understood him, and have devoted myself, mind and body, to the ever sacred cause of the weak against the strong. You see, my Eva, that Djalma shows himself worthy of such a father. This young Indian is so proud, so heroic in his bravery, that, like a young Greek of Leonidas' age, he fights with his breast bare; while other warriors of his country (who, indeed, usually have arms, breast, and shoulders uncovered) wear, in time of battle, a thick, impenetrable vest. The rash daring of this youth reminds me of Murat, king of Naples, whom, I have so often told you, I have seen a hundred times leading the most desperate charges with nothing but a riding-whip in his hand.' "

"That's another of those kings I was telling you of, whom the Emperor set up for his amusement," said Dagobert. "I once saw a Prussian officer prisoner,

whose face had been cut across by that madcap King of Naples' riding-whip; the mark was there, a black and blue stripe. The Prussian swore he was dishonored, and that a saber-cut would have been preferable. I should rather think so! That devil of a king; he had only one idea: 'Forward, on to the cannon!' As soon as they began to cannonade, one would have thought the guns were calling him with all their might, for he was soon up to them with his 'Here I am!' If I speak to you about him, my children, it's because he was fond of repeating; 'No one can break through a square of infantry if General Simon or I can't do it.'"

Rose continued:

"I have observed with pain, that, notwithstanding his youth, Djalma is often subject to fits of deep melancholy. At times, I have seen him exchange with his father looks of singular import. In spite of our mutual attachment, I believe that both conceal from me some sad family secret, in so far as I can judge from expressions which have dropped from them by chance.

"It relates to some strange event, which their vivid imaginations have invested with a supernatural character.

"And yet, my love, you and I have

no longer the right to smile at the credulity of others. I, since the French campaign, when I met with that extraordinary adventure, which, to this day, I am quite unable to understand—’ ”

“ This refers to the man who threw himself before the mouth of the cannon,” said Dagobert.

“ ‘ And you,’ ” continued the maiden, still reading, “ ‘ you, my dear Eva, since the visits of that young and beautiful woman, whom, as your mother asserted, she had seen at her mother’s house forty years before.’ ”

The orphans, in amazement, looked at the soldier.

“ Your mother never spoke to me of that, nor the general either, my children ; this is as strange to me as it is to you.”

With increasing excitement and curiosity, Rose continued :

“ ‘ After all, my dear Eva, things which appear very extraordinary may often be explained by a chance resemblance or a freak of nature. Marvels being always the result of optical illusion or heated fancy, a time must come when that which appeared to be superhuman or supernatural will prove to be the most simple and natural event in the world. I doubt not, therefore, that the things which we

denominate our prodigies will one day receive this commonplace solution.' ”

“ You see, my children—things appear marvelous, which at bottom are quite simple—though for a long time we understand nothing about them.”

“ As our father relates this, we must believe it, and not be astonished—eh, sister ? ”

“ Yes, truly—since it will be explained one day.”

“ For example,” said Dagobert, after a moment’s reflection, “ you two are so much alike that any one, who was not in the habit of seeing you daily, might easily take one for the other. Well ! if they did not know that you are, so to speak, ‘ doubles,’ they might think an imp was at work instead of such good little angels as you are.”

“ You are right, Dagobert ; in this way many things may be explained, even as our father says.” And Rose continued to read :

“ ‘ Not without pride, my gentle Eva, have I learned that Djalma has French blood in his veins. His father married, some years ago, a young girl whose family, of French origin, had long been settled at Batavia in the island of Java. This similarity of circumstances between my

old friend and myself—for your family also, my Eva, is of French origin, and long settled in a foreign land—has only served to augment my sympathy for him. Unfortunately, he has long had to mourn the loss of the wife whom he adored.

“ ‘See, my beloved Eva! my hand trembles as I write these words. I am weak—I am foolish—but, alas! my heart sinks within me. If such a misfortune were to happen to me—Oh, my God!—what would become of our child without thee—without his father—in that barbarous country? But no! the very fear is madness; and yet what a horrible torture is uncertainty! Where may you now be? What are you doing? What has become of you? Pardon these black thoughts, which are sometimes too much for me. They are the cause of my worst moments; for, when free from them, I can at least say to myself: I am proscribed, I am every way unfortunate—but, at the other end of the world, two hearts still beat for me with affection—yours, my Eva, and our child’s!’ ”

Rose could hardly finish this passage; for some seconds her voice was broken by sobs. There was, indeed, a fatal coincidence between the fears of General Simon and the sad reality; and what could be

more touching than these outpourings of the heart, written by the light of a watch-fire, on the eve of battle, by a soldier who thus sought to soothe the pangs of a separation which he felt bitterly, but knew not would be eternal?

“Poor general! he is unaware of our misfortune,” said Dagobert, after a moment’s silence; “but neither has he heard that he has two children, instead of one. That will be at least some consolation. But come, Blanche; do go on reading: I fear that this dwelling on grief fatigues your sister, and she is too much affected by it. Beside, after all, it is only just that you should take your share of its pleasure and its sorrow.”

Blanche took the letter, and Rose, having dried her eyes, laid in her turn her sweet head on the shoulder of her sister, who thus continued:

“‘I am calmer now, my dear Eva; I left off writing for a moment, and strove to banish those black presentiments. Let us resume our conversation! After discoursing so long about India, I will talk to you a little of Europe. Yesterday evening one of our people (a trusty fellow) rejoined our outposts. He brought me a letter, which had arrived from France at Calcutta; at length, I have news of my

father, and am no longer anxious on his account. This letter is dated in August of last year. I see by its contents that several other letters, to which he alludes, have either been delayed or lost ; for I had not received any for two years before, and was extremely uneasy about him. But my excellent father is the same as ever ! Age has not weakened him ; his character is as energetic, his health as robust, as in times past—still a workman, still proud of his order, still faithful to his austere republican ideas, still hoping much.

“ ‘ For he says to me, “ the time is at hand,” and he underlines those words. He gives me also, as you will see, good news of the family of old Dagobert, our friend—for in truth, my dear Eva, it soothes my grief to think that this excellent man is with you, that he will have accompanied you in your exile—for I know him—a kernel of gold beneath the rude rind of a soldier ! How he must love our child ! ’ ”

Here Dagobert coughed two or three times, stooped down, and appeared to be seeking on the ground the little red and blue check-handkerchief spread over his knees. He remained thus bent for some seconds, and, when he raised himself, he drew his hand across his mustache.

“How well our father knows you!”

“How rightly has he guessed that you would love us!”

“Well, well, children; pass over that! Let’s come to the part where the general speaks of my little Agricola, and of Gabriel, my wife’s adopted child. Poor woman! when I think that in three months perhaps—But come, child; read, read,” added the old soldier, wishing to conceal his emotion.

““I still hope against hope, my dear Eva, that these pages will one day reach you, and therefore I wish to insert in them all that can be interesting to Dagobert. It will be a consolation to him to have some news of his family. My father, who is still foreman at Mr. Hardy’s, tells me that worthy man has also taken into his house the son of old Dagobert. Agricola works under my father, who is enchanted with him. He is, he tells me, a tall and vigorous lad, who wields the heavy forge-hammer as if it were a feather, and is light-spirited as he is intelligent and laborious. He is the best workman in the establishment; and this does not prevent him in the evening, after his hard day’s work, when he returns home to his mother, whom he truly loves, from making songs and writing excellent patriotic verses.

His poetry is full of fire and energy; his fellow-workmen sing nothing else, and his lays have the power to warm the coldest and the most timid hearts.' ”

“ How proud you must be of your son, Dagobert,” said Rose, in admiration; “ he writes songs.”

“ Certainly, it is all very fine—but what pleases me best is, that he is good to his mother, and that he handles the hammer with a will. As for the songs, before he makes a ‘ Rising of the People,’ or a ‘ Mar-seillaise,’ he will have had to beat a good deal of iron; but where can this rascally sweet Agricola have learned to make songs at all? No doubt it was at school, where he went, as you will see, with his adopted brother Gabriel.”

At this name of Gabriel, which reminded them of the imaginary being whom they called their guardian angel, the curiosity of the young girls was greatly excited. With redoubled attention, Blanche continued in these words:

“ ‘ The adopted brother of Agricola, the poor deserted child whom the wife of our good Dagobert so generously took in, forms, my father tells me, a great contrast with Agricola; not in heart, for they have both excellent hearts; but Gabriel is as thoughtful and melancholy

as Agricola is lively, joyous, and active. Moreover, adds my father, each of them, so to speak, has the aspect which belongs to his character. Agricola is dark, tall, and strong, with a gay and bold air; Gabriel, on the contrary, is weak, fair, timid as a girl, and his face wears an expression of angelic mildness.' ”

The orphans looked at each other in surprise; then, as they turned toward the soldier their ingenuous countenances, Rose said to him. “Have you heard, Dagobert? Father says that your Gabriel is fair and has the face of an angel. Why, ’tis exactly like ours !”

“Yes, yes, I heard very well; it is that which surprised me in your dream.”

“I should like to know if he has also blue eyes,” said Rose.

“As for that, my children, though the general says nothing about it, I will answer for it: your fair boys have always blue eyes. But, blue or black, he will not use them to stare at young ladies; go on, and you will see why.”

Blanche resumed :

“His face wears an expression of angelic mildness. One of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, where he went with Agricola and other children of his quarter, struck with his intelligence and

good disposition, spoke of him to a person of consequence, who, becoming interested in the lad, placed him in a seminary for the clergy, and, since the last two years, Gabriel is a priest. He intends devoting himself to foreign missions, and will soon set out for America.' "

"Your Gabriel is a priest, it appears?" said Rose, looking at Dagobert.

"While ours is an angel," added Blanche.

"Which only proves that yours is a step higher than mine. Well, every one to his taste; there are good people in all trades; but I prefer that it should be Gabriel who has chosen the black gown. I'd rather see my boy with arms bare, hammer in hand, and a leathern apron round him, neither more nor less than your old grandfather, my children—the father of Marshal Simon, Duke of Ligny—for, after all, marshal and duke he is by the grace of the Emperor. Now finish your letter."

"Soon, alas, yes!" said Blanche; "there are only a few lines left." And she proceeded:

"Thus, my dear, loving Eva, if this journal should ever reach its destination, you will be able to satisfy Dagobert as to the position of his wife and son, whom he

left for our sakes. How can we ever repay such a sacrifice? But I feel sure that your good and generous heart will have found some means of compensation.

“ ‘Adieu ! Again adieu, for to-day, my beloved Eva ; I left off writing for a moment, to visit the tent of Djalma. He slept peacefully, and his father watched beside him ; with a smile, he banished my fears. This intrepid young man is no longer in any danger. May he still be spared in the combat of to-morrow ! Adieu, my gentle Eva ! the night is silent and calm ; the fires of the bivouac are slowly dying out, and our poor mountaineers repose after this bloody day ; I can hear, from hour to hour, the distant all’s-well of our sentinels. Those foreign words bring back my grief ; they remind me of what I sometimes forget in writing—that I am far away, separated from you and from my child ! Poor, beloved beings ! what will be your destiny ? Ah ! if I could only send you, in time, that medal, which, by a fatal accident, I carried away with me from Warsaw, you might, perhaps, obtain leave to visit France, or at least to send our child there with Dagobert ; for you know of what importance—But why add this sorrow to all the rest ? Unfortunately, the years are pass-

ing away, the fatal day will arrive, and this last hope, in which I live for you, will also be taken from me : but I will not close the evening by so sad a thought. Adieu, my beloved Eva ! Clasp our child to your bosom, and cover it with all the kisses which I send to both of you from the depths of exile !

“ ‘Till to-morrow—after the battle ! ’ ”

The reading of this touching letter was followed by a long silence. The tears of Rose and Blanche flowed together. Dago-bert, with his head resting on his hand, was absorbed in painful reflections.

Without doors the wind had now augmented in violence ; a heavy rain began to beat on the sounding panes ; the most profound silence reigned in the interior of the inn. But, while the daughters of General Simon were reading with such deep emotion these fragments of their father's journal, a strange and mysterious scene transpired in the menagerie of the brute-tamer.

CHAPTER IX.

THE CAGES.

MOROK had prepared himself. Over his deer-skin vest he had drawn the coat of mail—that steel tissue, as pliable as cloth, as hard as diamonds; next, clothing his arms and legs in their proper armor, and his feet in iron-bound buskins, and concealing all this defensive equipment under loose trousers and an ample pelisse carefully buttoned, he took in his hand a long bar of iron, white hot, set in a wooden handle.

Though long ago daunted by the skill and energy of the Prophet, his tiger Cain, his lion Judas, and his black panther Death, had sometimes attempted, in a moment of rebellion, to try their fangs and claws on his person; but, thanks to the armor concealed beneath his pelisse, they blunted their claws upon a skin of steel, and notched their fangs upon arms or legs of iron, while a slight touch of their master's metallic wand left a deep furrow in their smoking, shriveled flesh.

Finding the inutility of their efforts, and endowed with strong memory, the beasts soon learned that their teeth and

claws were powerless when directed against this invulnerable being. Hence, their terrified submission reached to such a point that, in his public representations, their master could make them crouch and cower at his feet by the least movement of a little wand covered with flame-colored paper.

The Prophet, thus armed with care, and holding in his hand the iron made hot by Goliath, descended by the trap-door of the loft into the large shed beneath, in which were deposited the cages of his animals. A mere wooden partition separated this shed from the stable that contained his horses.

A lantern, with a reflector, threw a vivid light on the cages. They were four in number. A wide iron grating formed their sides, turning at one end upon hinges like a door, so as to give ingress to the animal; the bottom of each den rested on two axletrees and four small iron castors, so that they could easily be removed to the large covered wagon in which they were placed during a journey. One of them was empty; the other three contained, as already intimated, a panther, a tiger, and a lion.

The panther, originally from Java, seemed to merit the gloomy name of

Death, by her grim ferocious aspect. Completely black, she lay crouching and rolled up in the bottom of her cage, and her dark hues mingling with the obscurity which surrounded her, nothing was distinctly visible but fixed and glaring eyes—yellow balls of phosphoric light, which only kindled, as it were, in the night time; for it is the nature of all the animals of the feline species to enjoy entire clearness of vision but in darkness.

The Prophet entered the stable in silence: the dark red of his long pelisse contrasted with the pale yellow of his straight hair and beard; the lantern, placed at some height above the ground, threw its rays full upon this man, and the strong light, opposed to the deep shadows around it, gave effect to the sharp proportions of his bony and savage-looking figure.

He approached the cage slowly. The white rim, which encircled his eyeball, appeared to dilate, and his look rivaled in motionless brilliancy the steadily sparkling gaze of the panther. Still crouching in the shade, she felt already the fascination of that glance; two or three times she dropped her eyelids with a low, angry howl; then, reopening her eyes, as if in spite of herself, she kept them fastened

immovably on those of the Prophet. And now her rounded ears clung to her skull, which was flattened like a viper's; the skin of her forehead became convulsively wrinkled; she drew in her bristling, but silky muzzle, and twice silently opened her jaws, garnished with formidable fangs. From that moment a kind of magnetic connection seemed to be established between the man and the beast.

The Prophet extended his glowing bar toward the cage, and said, in a sharp, imperious tone: "Death! come here!"

The panther rose, but so dragged herself along that her belly and the bend of her legs touched the ground. She was three feet high, and nearly five in length; her elastic and fleshy spine, the sinews of her thighs as well developed as those of a race horse, her deep chest, her enormous jutting shoulders, the nerve and muscle in her short, thick paws—all announced that this terrible animal united vigor with suppleness, and strength with agility.

Morok, with his iron wand still extended in the direction of the cage, made a step toward the panther. The panther made a stride toward the Prophet. Morok stopped; Death stopped also.

At this moment the tiger, Judas, to whom Morok's back was turned, bounded

violently in his cage, as if jealous of the attention which his master paid to the panther. He growled hoarsely, and, raising his head, showed the under part of his redoubtable triangular jaw, and his broad chest of a dirty white, with which blended the copper color, streaked with black, of his sides; his tail, like a huge red serpent, with rings of ebony, now clung to his flanks, now lashed them with a slow and continuous movement; his eyes, of a transparent, brilliant green, were fixed upon the Prophet.

Such was the influence of this man over his animals, that Judas almost immediately ceased growling, as if frightened at his own temerity; but his respiration continued loud and deep. Morok turned his face toward him, and examined him very attentively during some seconds. The panther, no longer subject to the influence of his master's look, slunk back to crouch in the shade.

A sharp cracking, in sudden breaks, like that which great animals make in gnawing hard substances, was now heard from the cage of the lion. It drew the attention of the Prophet, who, leaving the tiger, advanced toward the other den.

Nothing could be seen of the lion but

his monstrous croup of a reddish yellow. His thighs were gathered under him, and his thick mane served entirely to conceal his head. But by the tension and movement of the muscles of his loins, and the curving of his backbone, it was easy to perceive that he was making violent efforts with his throat and his forepaws. The Prophet approached the cage with some uneasiness, fearing that, notwithstanding his orders, Goliath had given the lion some bones to gnaw. To assure himself of it, he said in a quick and firm voice :
“Cain !”

The lion did not change his position.

“Cain ! come here !” repeated Morok in a louder tone. The appeal was useless ; the lion did not move, and the noise continued.

“Cain ! come here !” said the Prophet a third time ; but, as he pronounced these words, he applied the end of the glowing bar to the haunch of the lion.

Scarcely did the light track of smoke appear on the reddish hide of Cain, when, with a spring of incredible agility, he turned and threw himself against the grating, not crouching, but at a single bound—upright, superb, terrifying. The Prophet, being at the angle of the cage, Cain, in his fury, had raised himself side-





The end releases other men from strife;
His fate is ceaseless toil and deathless life.
—The Wandering Jew, Vol. 1.

ways to face his master, and, leaning his huge flank against the bars, thrust between them his enormous fore-leg, which, with his swollen muscles, was as large as Goliath's thigh.

"Cain ! down !" said the Prophet, approaching briskly.

The lion did not obey immediately. His lips, curling with rage, displayed fangs as long, as large, and as pointed as the tusks of a wild boar. But Morok touched those lips with the end of the burning metal ; and, as he felt the smart, followed by an unexpected summons of his master, the lion, not daring to roar, uttered a hollow growl, and his great body sunk down at once in an attitude of submission and fear.

The Prophet took the lantern to see what Cain had been gnawing. It was one of the planks from the floor of his den, which he had succeeded in tearing up, and was crunching between his teeth in the extremity of his hunger. For a few moments the most profound silence reigned in the menagerie. The prophet, with his hands behind his back, went from one cage to the other, observing the animals with a restless, contemplative look, as if he hesitated to make between them an important and difficult choice.

From time to time he listened at the great door of the shed, which opened on the courtyard of the inn. At length this door turned on its hinges, and Goliath appeared, his clothes dripping with water.

"Well! Is it done?" said the Prophet.

"Not without trouble. Luckily, the night is dark, it blows hard, and it pours with rain."

"Then there is no suspicion?"

"None, master. Your information was good. The door of the cellar opens on the fields, just under the window of the lasses. When you whistled to let me know it was time, I crept out with a stool I had provided; I put it up against the wall and mounted upon it; with my six feet that made nine, and I could lean my elbows on the window-ledge; I took the shutter in one hand, and the haft of my knife in the other, and, while I broke two of the panes, I pushed the shutter with all my might."

"And they thought it was the wind?"

"Yes. They thought it was the wind. You see, the 'brute' is not such a brute, after all. That done, I crept back into my cellar, carrying my stool with me. In a little time, I heard the voice of the old man; it was well I had made haste."

"Yes; when I whistled to you, he had

just entered the supper-room. I thought he would have been longer."

"That man's not built to remain long at supper," said the giant, contemptuously. "Some moments after the panes had been broken, the old man opened the window, and called his dog, saying: 'Jump out!' I went and hid myself at the further end of the cellar, or that infernal dog would have scented me through the door."

"The dog is now shut up in the stable with the old man's horse. Go on!"

"When I heard them close shutter and window, I came out of my cellar, replaced my stool, and again mounted upon it. Unfastening the shutter, I opened it without noise, but the two broken panes were stopped up with the skirts of a pelisse. I heard talking, but I could see nothing; so I moved the pelisse a little, and then I could see the two lasses in bed opposite to me, and the old man sitting down with his back to where I stood."

"But the knapsack — the knapsack? That is the most important."

"The knapsack was near the window, on a table, by the side of a lamp; I could have reached it by stretching out my arm."

"What did you hear said?"

"As you told me to think only of the

knapsack, I can only remember what concerns the knapsack. The old man said he had some papers in it—the letters of a general—his money—his cross.”

“Good—what next?”

“As it was difficult for me to keep the pelisse away from the hole, it slipped through my fingers. In trying to get hold of it again, I put my hand too much forward. One of the lasses saw it, and screamed out, pointing to the window.”

“Dolt!” exclaimed the Prophet, becoming pale with rage; “you have ruined all.”

“Stop a bit! there is nothing broken yet. When I heard the scream, I jumped down from my stool, and got back into the cellar; as the dog was no longer about, I left the door ajar, so that I could hear them open the window, and see, by the light, that the old man was looking out with the lamp; but he could find no ladder, and the window was too high for any man of common size to reach it!”

“He will have thought, like the first time, that it was the wind. You are less awkward than I imagined.”

“The wolf has become a fox, as you said. Knowing where the knapsack was to be found with the money and the

papers, and not being able to do more for the moment, I came away—and here I am.”

“Go upstairs and fetch me the longest pike.”

“Yes, master.”

“And the red blanket.”

“Yes, master.”

“Go!”

Goliath began to mount the ladder; half-way up he stopped. “Master,” said he, “may I not bring down a bit of meat for Death?—you will see that she’ll bear me malice; she puts it all down to my account; she never forgets, and on the first occasion—”

“The pike and the cloth!” repeated the Prophet, in an imperious tone. And while Goliath, swearing to himself, proceeded to execute his instructions, Morok opened the great door of the shed, looked out into the yard, and listened.

“Here’s the pike and the cloth,” said the giant, as he descended the ladder with the articles. “Now, what must I do next?”

“Return to the cellar, mount once more by the window, and when the old man leaves the room—”

“Who will make him leave the room?”

“Never mind! he will leave it.”

“What next?”

“You say the lamp is near the window?”

“Quite near—on the table next to the knapsack.”

“Well, then, as soon as the old man leaves the room, push open the window, thrown down the lamp, and if you accomplish cleverly what remains to do—the ten florins are yours—you remember it all?”

“Yes, yes.”

“The girls will be so frightened by the noise and darkness that they will remain dumb with terror.”

“Make yourself easy! The wolf turned into a fox; why not a serpent?”

“There is yet something.”

“Well, what now?”

“The roof of this shed is not very high, the window of the loft is easy of access, the night is dark—instead of returning by the door—”

“I will come in at the window.”

“Ay, and without noise.”

“Like a regular snake!” and the giant departed.

“Yes!” said the Prophet to himself, after a long silence, “these means are sure. It was not for me to hesitate. A blind and obscure instrument, I know not

the motives of the orders I have received; but from the recommendations which accompany them—from the position of him who sends them—immense interests must be involved—interests connected with all that is highest and greatest upon earth! And yet how can these two girls, almost beggars, how can this wretched soldier represent such interests? No matter,” added he, with humility; “I am the arm which acts—it is for the head, which thinks and orders, to answer for its work.”

Soon after the Prophet left the shed, carrying with him the red cloth, and directed his steps toward the little stable that contained Jovial. The crazy door, imperfectly secured by a latch, was easily opened. At sight of a stranger Spoilsport threw himself upon him; but his teeth encountered the iron leggings of the Prophet, who, in spite of the efforts of the dog, took Jovial by his halter, threw the blanket over his head to prevent his either seeing or smelling, and led him from the stable into the interior of the menagerie, of which he closed the door.

CHAPTER X.

THE SURPRISE.

THE orphans, after reading the journal of their father, remained for some moments silent, sad and pensive, contemplating the leaves, yellowed by time. Dagobert, also plunged in a reverie, thought of his wife and son, from whom he had been so long separated, and hoped soon to see again.

The soldier was the first to break the silence, which had lasted for several minutes. Taking the leaves from the hand of Blanche, he folded them carefully, put them into his pocket, and thus addressed the orphans :

“Courage, my children ! You see what a brave father you have. Think only of the pleasure of greeting him, and remember always the name of the gallant youth to whom you will owe that pleasure—for without him your father would have been killed in India.”

“Djalma ! we shall never forget him,” said Rose.

“And if our guardian angel Gabriel should return,” added Blanche, “we will

ask him to watch over Djalma as over ourselves."

"Very well, my children; I am sure that you will forget nothing that concerns good feeling. But to return to the traveler who came to visit your poor mother in Siberia. He had seen the general a month after the events of which you have read, and at a moment when he was about to enter on a new campaign against the English. It was then that your father intrusted him with the papers and medal."

"But of what use will this medal be to us, Dagobert?"

"And what is the meaning of these words engraved upon it?" added Rose, as she drew it from her bosom.

"Why, it means, my children, that on the 13th of February, 1832, we must be at No. 3 Rue Saint François, Paris."

"But what are we to do there?"

"Your poor mother was seized so quickly with her last illness that she was unable to tell me. All I know is, that this medal came to her from her parents, and that it had been a relic preserved in her family for more than a century."

"And how did our father get it?"

"Among the articles which had been

hastily thrown into the coach, when he was removed by force from Warsaw, was a dressing-case of your mother's, in which was contained this medal. Since that time the general had been unable to send it back, having no means of communicating with us, and not even knowing where we were."

"This medal is, then, of great importance to us?"

"Unquestionably; for never, during fifteen years, had I seen your mother so happy, as on the day the traveler brought it back to her. 'Now,' said she to me, in the presence of the stranger, and with tears of joy in her eyes, 'now may my children's future be brilliant as their life has hitherto been miserable. I will entreat of the governor of Siberia permission to go to France with my daughters; it will perhaps be thought I have been sufficiently punished by fifteen years of exile, and the confiscation of my property. Should they refuse, I will remain here; and they will at least allow me to send my children to France, and you must accompany them, Dagobert. You shall set out immediately, for much time has been already lost; and if you were not to arrive before the 13th of next February this cruel separation and toilsome journey would have been all in vain.'"

“Suppose we were one day after?”

“Your mother told me that if we arrived on the 14th instead of the 13th it would be too late. She also gave me a thick letter, to put into the post for France, in the first town we should pass through—which I have done.”

“And do you think we shall be at Paris in time?”

“I hope so; still, if you are strong enough, we must sometimes make forced marches—for, if we only travel our five leagues a day, and that without accident, we shall scarcely reach Paris until the beginning of February, and it is better to be a little beforehand.”

“But as father is in India, and condemned to death if he return to France, then shall we see him?”

“And where shall we see him?”

“Poor children! there are so many things you have yet to learn. When the traveler quitted him, the general could not return to France, but now he can do so.”

“And why is that?”

“Because the Bourbons, who had banished him, were themselves turned out last year. The news must reach India, and your father will certainly come to meet you at Paris, because he expects

that you and your mother will be there on the 13th of next February."

"Ah! now I understand how we may hope to see him!" said Rose with a sigh.

"Do you know the name of this traveler, Dagobert?"

"No, my children; but whether called Jack or John, he is a good sort. When he left your mother, she thanked him with tears for all his kindness and devotion to the general, herself and her children; but he pressed her hands in his, and said to her, in so gentle a voice that I could not help being touched by it: 'Why do you thank me? Did He not say, "LOVE YE ONE ANOTHER"?'?"

"Who is that, Dagobert?"

"Yes, of whom did the traveler speak?"

"I know nothing about it; only the manner in which he pronounced those words struck me, and they were the last he spoke."

"Love one another!" repeated Rose, thoughtfully.

"How beautiful are those words!" added Blanche.

"And whither was the traveler going?"

"Far, very far into the North, as he told your mother. When she saw him depart, she said to me: 'His mild, sad

talk has affected me even to tears ; while I listened to him, I seemed to be growing better—I seemed to love my husband and my children more—and yet, to judge by the expression of his countenance, one would think that this stranger had never either smiled or wept !” She and I watched him from the door as long as we could follow him with our eyes ; he carried his head down, and his walk was slow, calm, and firm ; one might fancy that he counted his steps. And, talking of steps, I remarked yet another thing.”

“ What was it, Dagobert ? ”

“ You know that the road which led to our house was always damp, because of the overflowing of the little spring.”

“ Yes.”

“ Well, then, the mark of the traveler’s footsteps remained in the clay, and I saw that he had nails under his shoe in the form of a cross.”

“ How in the form of a cross ? ”

“ Look ! ” said Dagobert, placing the tip of his finger seven times on the coverlet of the bed ; “ they were arranged thus beneath his heel :

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You see it forms a cross."

"What could it mean, Dagobert?"

"Chance, perhaps—yes, chance—and yet, in spite of myself, this confounded cross left behind him struck me as a bad omen, for hardly was he gone when misfortune after misfortune fell upon us."

"Alas! the death of our mother!"

"Yes—but, before that, another piece of ill-luck. You had not yet returned, and she was writing her petition to ask leave to go to France or to send you there, when I heard the gallop of a horse. It was a courier from the governor-general of Siberia. He brought us orders to change our residence; within three days we were to join other condemned persons, and be removed with them four hundred leagues further north. Thus, after fifteen years of exile, they redoubled in cruelty toward your mother."

"Why did they thus torment her?"

"One would think that some evil genius was at work against her. A few days later, the traveler would no longer have found us at Milosk; and if he had joined

us further on, it would have been too far for the medal and papers to be of use—since, having set out almost immediately, we shall hardly arrive in time at Paris. ‘If they had some interest to prevent me and my children from going to France,’ said your mother, ‘they would act just as they have done. To banish us four hundred leagues further is to render impossible this journey, of which the term is fixed.’ And the idea overwhelmed her with grief.”

“Perhaps it was this unexpected sorrow that was the cause of her sudden illness.”

“Alas! no, my children; it was that infernal cholera, who arrives without giving you notice—for he, too, is a great traveler—and strikes you down like a thunderbolt. Three hours after the traveler had left us, when you returned quite pleased and gay from the forest, with your large bunches of wild-flowers for your mother, she was already in the last agony, and hardly to be recognized. The cholera had broken out in the village, and that evening five persons died of it. Your mother had only time to hang the medal about your neck, my dear little Rose, to recommend you both to my care, and to beg that we should set out immediately. When she was gone, the new order of

exile could not apply to you; and I obtained permission from the governor to take my departure with you for France, according to the last wishes—”

The soldier could not finish the sentence; he covered his eyes with his hand, while the orphans embraced him, sobbing.

“Oh! but,” resumed Dagobert, with pride, after a moment of painful silence, “it was then that you showed yourselves the brave daughters of the general. Notwithstanding the danger, it was impossible to tear you from your mother’s bedside; you remained with her to the last, you closed her eyes, you watched there all night, and you would not leave the village till you had seen me plant the little wooden cross over the grave I had dug for her.”

Dagobert paused abruptly. A strange, wild neighing, mingled with ferocious roarings, made the soldier start from his seat. He grew pale, and cried: “It is Jovial! my horse! What are they doing to my horse?” With that, opening the door, he rushed down the stairs precipitately.

The two sisters clung together, so terrified at the sudden departure of the soldier, that they saw not an enormous hand pass through the broken panes,

unfasten the catch of the window, push it violently open, and throw down the lamp placed on the little table, on which was the soldier's knapsack. The orphans thus found themselves plunged into complete darkness.

CHAPTER XI.

JOVIAL AND DEATH.

MOROK had led Jovial into the middle of the menagerie, and then removed the cloth which prevented him from seeing and smelling. Scarcely had the tiger, lion, and panther caught a glimpse of him, than they threw themselves, half-famished, against the bars of their dens.

The horse, struck with stupor, his neck stretched out, his eye fixed, and trembling through all his limbs, appeared as if nailed to the ground; an abundant icy sweat rolled suddenly down his flanks. The lion and the tiger uttered fearful roarings, and struggled violently in their dens. The panther did not roar, but her mute rage was terrific.

With a tremendous bound, at the risk of breaking her skull, she sprung from the back of the cage against the bars; then, still mute, still furious, she crawled back to the extreme corner of the den, and with a new spring, as impetuous as

it was blind, she again strove to force out the iron grating. Three times had she thus bounded—silent, appalling—when the horse, passing from the immobility of stupor to the wild agony of fear, neighed long and loud, and rushed in desperation at the door by which he had entered. Finding it closed he hung his head, bent his knees a little, and rubbed his nostrils against the opening left between the ground and the bottom of the door, as if he wished to inhale the air from the outside; then, more and more affrighted, he began to neigh with redoubled force, and struck out violently with his fore-feet.

At the moment when Death was about once more to make her spring, the Prophet approached her cage. The heavy bolt which secured the grating was pushed from its staple by the pike of the brute-tamer, and, in another second, Morok was half way up the ladder that communicated with the loft.

The roaring of the lion and tiger, mingled with the neighing of Jovial, now resounded through all parts of the inn. The panther had again thrown herself furiously on the grating; and this time yielding with one spring, she was in the middle of the shed.

The light of the lantern was reflected

from the glossy ebon of her hide, spotted with stains of a duller black. For an instant she remained motionless, crouching upon her thick-set limbs, with her head close to the floor, as if calculating the distance of the leap by which she was to reach the horse; then suddenly she darted upon him.

On seeing her break from her cage Jovial had thrown himself violently against the door, which was made to open inwards, and leaned against it with all his might, as though he would force it down. Then, at the moment when Death took her leap, he reared up in almost an erect position; but she, rapid as lightning, had fastened upon his throat and hung there, while at the same time she buried the sharp claws of her fore-feet in his chest. The jugular vein of the horse opened; a torrent of bright red blood spouted forth beneath the teeth of the panther, who, now supporting herself on her hind-legs, squeezed her victim up against the door, while she dug into his flank with her claws, and laid bare the palpitating flesh. Then his half-strangled neighing became awful.

Suddenly these words resounded: "Courage, Jovial!—I am at hand! Courage!"

It was the voice of Dagobert, who was

exhausting himself in desperate exertions to force open the door that concealed this sanguinary struggle. "Jovial!" cried the soldier, "I am here. Help! help!"

At the sound of that friendly and well known voice, the poor animal, almost at its last gasp, strove to turn its head in the direction whence came the accents of his master, answered him with a plaintive neigh, and, sinking beneath the efforts of the panther, fell prostrate, first on its knees, then upon its flank, so that its backbone lay right across the door, and still prevented its being opened. And now, all was finished. The panther, squatting down upon the horse, crushed him with all her paws, and, in spite of some last faint kicks, buried her bloody snout in his body.

"Help! help! my horse!" cried Dagobert, as he vainly shook the door. "And no arms!" he added with rage; "no arms!"

"Take care!" exclaimed the brute-tamer, who appeared at the window of the loft; "do not attempt to enter—it might cost you your life. My panther is furious."

"But my horse! my horse!" cried Dagobert, in a voice of agony.

"He must have strayed from his stable

during the night, and pushed open the door of the shed. At sight of him the panther must have broken out of her cage and seized him. You are answerable for all the mischief that may ensue," added the brute-tamer, with a menacing air; "for I shall have to run the greatest danger to make Death return to her den."

"But my horse! only save my horse!" cried Dagobert, in a tone of hopeless supplication.

The Prophet disappeared from the window.

The roaring of the animals and the shouts of Dagobert had roused from sleep every one in the White Falcon. Here and there lights were seen moving and windows were thrown open hurriedly. The servants of the inn soon appeared in the yard with lanterns, and surrounding Dagobert, inquired of him what had happened.

"My horse is there," cried the soldier, continuing to shake the door, "and one of that scoundrel's animals has escaped from its cage."

At these words the people of the inn, already terrified by the frightful roaring, fled from the spot and ran to inform the host. The soldier's anguish may be

conceived, as pale, breathless, with his ear close to the chink of the door, he stood listening. By degrees the roaring had ceased, and nothing was heard but low growls, accompanied by the stern voice of the Prophet, repeating in harsh, abrupt accents: "Death! come here! Death!"

The night was profoundly dark, and Dagobert did not perceive Goliath, who, crawling carefully along the tiled roof, entered the loft by the attic window.

And now the gate of the court-yard was again opened, and the landlord of the inn appeared, followed by a number of men. Armed with a carbine, he advanced with precaution; his people carried staves and pitchforks.

"What is the row here?" said he, as he approached Dagobert. "What a hubbub in my house! The devil take wild-beast showmen, and negligent fellows who don't know how to tie a horse to the manger! If your beast is hurt, so much the worse for you; you should have taken more care of it."

Instead of replying to these reproaches, the soldier, who still listened attentively to what was going on in the shed, made a sign to entreat silence. Suddenly a ferocious roar was heard, followed by a

loud scream from the Prophet; and, almost immediately after, the panther howled piteously.

“You are no doubt the cause of some great accident,” said the frightened host to the soldier; “did you not hear that cry? Morok is, perhaps, dangerously wounded.”

Dagobert was about to answer, when the door opened, and Goliath appeared on the threshold.

“You may enter now,” said he; “the danger is over.”

The interior of the menagerie presented a singular spectacle. The Prophet, pale, and scarcely able to conceal his agitation beneath an apparent air of calmness, was kneeling some paces from the cage of the panther, in the attitude of one absorbed in himself; the motion of his lips indicating that he was praying. At sight of the host and the people of the inn, he rose, and said in a solemn voice: “I thank Thee, my Preserver, that I have been able to conquer, by the strength which Thou hast given me.”

Then, folding his arms, with haughty brow and imperious glance, he seemed to enjoy the triumph he had achieved over Death, who, stretched on the bottom of her den, continued to utter plaintive

howlings. The spectators of this scene, ignorant that the pelisse of a brute-tamer covered a complete suit of armor, and attributing the cries of the panther solely to fear, were struck with astonishment and admiration at the intrepidity and almost supernatural power of this man. A few steps behind him stood Goliath, leaning upon the ashen pikestaff. Finally, not far from the cage, in the midst of a pool of blood, lay the dead body of Jovial.

At sight of the blood-stained and torn remains, Dagobert stood motionless, and his rough countenance assumed an expression of the deepest grief: then, throwing himself on his knees, he lifted the head of Jovial; and when he saw those dull, glassy, and half-closed eyes, once so bright and intelligent, as they turned toward a much-loved master, the soldier could not suppress an exclamation of bitter anguish. Forgetting his anger, forgetting the deplorable consequences of this accident, so fatal to the interests of the two maidens, who would thus be prevented from continuing their journey—he thought only of the horrible death of his poor old horse, the ancient companion of his fatigues and wars, the faithful animal, twice wounded like himself, and from whom for so many

years he had never been separated. This poignant emotion was so cruelly, so affectingly visible in the soldier's countenance, that the landlord and his people felt themselves for a moment touched with pity, as they gazed on the tall veteran kneeling beside his dead horse.

But when, following the course of his regrets, he thought how Jovial had also been the companion of his exile ; how the mother of the orphans had formerly (like her daughters) undertaken a toilsome journey with the aid of this unfortunate animal, the fatal consequences of his loss presented themselves on a sudden to his mind. Then, fury succeeding to grief, he rose, with anger flashing from his eyes, and threw himself on the Prophet ; with one hand he seized him by the throat, and with the other administered five or six heavy blows, which fell harmlessly on the coat of mail.

“ Rascal ! you shall answer to me for my horse's death ! ” said the soldier, as he continued his correction. Morok, light and sinewy, could not struggle with advantage against Dagobert, who, aided by his tall stature, still displayed extraordinary vigor. It needed the intervention of Goliath and the landlord to rescue the Prophet from the hands of the old gren-

adier. After some moments, they succeeded in separating the two champions. Morok was white with rage. It needed new efforts to prevent his seizing the pike to attack Dagobert.

"It is abominable!" cried the host, addressing the soldier, who pressed his clenched fists in despair against his bald forehead. "You expose this good man to be devoured by his beasts, and then you wish to beat him into the bargain. Is this fitting conduct for a graybeard? Shall we have to fetch the police? You showed yourself more reasonable in the early part of the evening."

These words recalled the soldier to himself. He regretted his impetuosity the more, as the fact of his being a stranger might augment the difficulty of his position. It was necessary above all to obtain the price of his horse, so as to be enabled to continue his journey, the success of which might be compromised by a single day's delay. With a violent effort, therefore, he succeeded in restraining his wrath.

"You are right—I was too hasty," said he to the host, in an agitated voice, which he tried to make as calm as possible, "I had not the same patience as before. But ought not this man to be responsible for

the loss of my horse? I make you judge in the matter."

"Well then, as judge, I am not of your opinion. All this has been your own fault. You tied up your horse badly, and he strayed by chance into this shed, of which no doubt the door was half-open," said the host, evidently taking part with the brute-tamer.

"It was just as you say," answered Goliath. "I can remember it. I left the door ajar, that the beasts might have some air in the night. The cages were well shut, and there was no danger."

"Very true," said one of the standers-by.

"It was only the sight of the horse," added another, "that made the panther furious, so as to break out of its cage."

"It is the Prophet who has the most right to complain," observed a third.

"No matter what this or that person says," returned Dagobert, whose patience was beginning to fail him, "I say, that I must have either money or a horse on the instant—yes, on the instant—for I wish to quit this unlucky house."

"And I say, it is you that must indemnify me," cried Morok, who had kept this stage-trick for the last, and who now exhibited his left hand all bloody, having

hitherto concealed it beneath the sleeve of his pelisse. "I shall perhaps be disabled for life," he added; "see what a wound the panther has made here!"

Without having the serious character that the Prophet ascribed to it, the wound was a pretty deep one. This last argument gained for him the general sympathy. Reckoning no doubt upon this incident to secure the winning of a cause that he now regarded as his own, the host said to the hostler: "There is only one way to make a finish. It is to call up the burgomaster, and beg him to step here. He will decide who is right or wrong."

"I was just going to propose it to you," said the soldier; "for, after all, I cannot take the law into my own hands."

"Fritz, run to the burgomaster's!"—and the hostler started in all haste. His master, fearing to be compromised by the examination of the soldier, whose papers he had neglected to ask for on his arrival, said to him: "The burgomaster will be in a very bad humor, to be disturbed so late. I have no wish to suffer by it, and I must therefore beg you to go and fetch me your papers, to see if they are in rule. I ought to have made you show them, when you arrived here in the evening."

“They are upstairs in my knapsack; you shall have them,” answered the soldier—and turning away his head, and putting his hand before his eyes, as he passed the dead body of Jovial, he went out to rejoin the sisters.

The Prophet followed him with a glance of triumph, and said to himself: “There he goes!—without horse, without money, without papers. I could not do more—for I was forbidden to do more—I was to act with as much cunning as possible, and preserve appearances. Now every one will think this soldier in the wrong. I can at least answer for it, that he will not continue his journey for some days—since such great interests appear to depend on his arrest and that of the young girls.”

A quarter of an hour after this reflection of the brute-tamer, Karl, Goliath’s comrade, left the hiding-place where his master had concealed him during the evening, and set out for Leipsic, with a letter which Morok had written in haste, and which Karl, on his arrival, was to put immediately into the post.

The address of this letter was as follows:

“A MONSIEUR RODIN, Rue du Millieu des-Ursins, No. 11, A Paris, France.”

CHAPTER XII.

THE BURGOMASTER.

DAGOBERT'S anxiety increased every moment. Certain that his horse had not entered the shed of its own accord, he attributed the event which had taken place to the spite of the brute-tamer ; but he sought in vain for the motive of this wretch's animosity, and he reflected with dismay, that his cause, however just, would depend on the good or bad humor of a judge dragged from his slumbers, and who might be ready to condemn upon fallacious appearances.

Fully determined to conceal, as long as possible, from the orphans the fresh misfortune which had befallen them, he was proceeding to open the door of their chamber, when he stumbled over Spoil-sport—for the dog had run back to his post, after vainly trying to prevent the Prophet from leading away Jovial. "Luckily the dog has returned ; the poor little things have been well guarded," said the soldier, as he opened the door. To his great surprise, the room was in utter darkness.

"My children," cried he, "why are you

without a light?" There was no answer. In terror, he groped his way to the bed, and took the hand of one of the sisters: the hand was cold as ice.

"Rose, my children!" cried he. "Blanche, give me some answer! you frighten me." Still the same silence continued; the hand which he held remained cold and powerless, and yielded passively to his touch.

Just then, the moon emerged from the black clouds that surrounded her, and threw sufficient light into the little room, and upon the bed, which faced the window, for the soldier to see that the two sisters had fainted. The bluish light of the moon added to the paleness of the orphans; they held each other in a half embrace, and Rose had buried her head on Blanche's bosom.

"They must have fainted through fear," exclaimed Dagobert, running to fetch his gourd. "Poor things! after a day of so much excitement, it is not surprising." And, moistening the corner of a handkerchief with a few drops of brandy, the soldier knelt beside the bed, gently chafed the temples of the two sisters, and held the linen, wet with the spirituous liquor, to their little pink nostrils.

Still on his knees, and bending his dark, anxious face over the orphans, he waited some moments before again resorting to the only restorative in his power. A slight shiver of Rose gave him renewed hope ; the young girl turned her head on the pillow with a sigh ; then she started, and opened her eyes with an expression of astonishment and alarm ; but, not immediately recognizing Dagobert, she exclaimed : “ Oh, sister ! ” and threw herself into the arms of Blanche.

The latter also was beginning to experience the effect of the soldier’s care. The exclamation of Rose completely roused her from her lethargy, and she clung to her sister, again sharing the fright without knowing its cause.

“ They’ve come to—that’s the chief point,” said Dagobert, “ now we shall soon get rid of these foolish fears.” Then, softening his voice, he added : “ Well, my children, courage ! you are better. It is I who am here—me, Dagobert ! ”

The orphans made a hasty movement, and, turning toward the soldier their sweet faces, which were still full of dismay and agitation, they both, by a graceful impulse, extended their arms to him and cried : “ It is you, Dagobert—then we are safe ! ”

"Yes, my children, it is I," said the veteran, taking their hands in his, and pressing them joyfully. "So you have been much frightened during my absence?"

"Oh, frightened to death!"

"If you knew—oh, goodness! if you knew—"

"But the lamp is extinguished—why is that?"

"We did not do it."

"Come—recover yourselves, poor children, and tell me all about it. I have no good opinion of this inn; but, luckily, we shall soon leave it. It was an ill wind that blew me hither—though, to be sure, there was no other in the village. But what has happened?"

"You were hardly gone when the window flew open violently, and the lamp and table fell together with a loud crash."

"Then our courage failed—we screamed and clasped each other, for we thought we could hear some one moving in the room."

"And we were so frightened that we fainted away."

Unfortunately, persuaded that it was the violence of the wind which had already broken the glass, and shaken the window, Dagobert attributed this second accident to the same cause as the first,

thinking that he had not properly secured the fastening and that the orphans had been deceived by a false alarm. "Well, well—it is over now," said he to them: "calm yourselves, and don't think of it any more."

"But why did you leave us so hastily, Dagobert?"

"Yes, now I remember—did we not hear a great noise, sister, and see Dagobert run to the staircase, crying: "My horse! what are they doing to my horse?"

"It was then Jovial who neighed?"

These questions renewed the anguish of the soldier; he feared to answer them, and said, with a confused air: "Yes—Jovial neighed—but it was nothing. By the by, we must have a light here. Do you know where I put my flint and steel last evening? Well, I have lost my senses; it is here in my pocket. Luckily, too, we have a candle, which I am going to light; I want to look in my knapsack for some papers I require."

Dagobert struck a few sparks, obtained a light, and saw that the window was indeed open, the table thrown down, and the lamp lying by the side of the knapsack. He shut the window, set the little table on its feet again, placed the knap-

sack upon it, and began to unbuckle this last in order to take out his portfolio, which had been deposited, along with his cross and purse, in a kind of pocket between the outside and the lining. The straps had been readjusted with so much care that there was no appearance of the knapsack having been disturbed; but when the soldier plunged his hand into the pocket above mentioned he found it empty. Struck with consternation, he grew pale, and retreated a step, crying: "How is this?—Nothing!"

"What is the matter?" said Blanche. He made her no answer. Motionless, he leaned against the table, with his hand still buried in the pocket. Then, yielding to a vague hope—for so cruel a reality did not appear possible—he hastily emptied the contents of the knapsack on the table—his poor half-worn clothes—his old uniform-coat of the horse-grenadiers of the Imperial Guard, a sacred relic for the soldier—but, turn and return them as he would, he found neither his purse, nor the portfolio that contained his papers, the letters of General Simon, and his cross.

In vain, with that serious childishness which always accompanies a hopeless search, he took the knapsack by the two

ends, and shook it vigorously: nothing came out. The orphans looked on with uneasiness, not understanding his silence or his movements, for his back was turned to them. Blanche ventured to say to him in a timid voice: "What ails you—you don't answer us—What is it you are looking for in your knapsack?"

Still mute, Dagobert searched his own person, turned out all his pockets—nothing! For the first time in his life, perhaps, his two children, as he called them, had spoken to him without receiving a reply. Blanche and Rose felt the big tears start into their eyes; thinking that the soldier was angry, they durst not again address him.

"No, no! it is impossible—no!" said the veteran, pressing his hand to his forehead, and seeking in his memory where he might have put those precious objects, the loss of which he could not yet bring himself to believe. A sudden beam of joy flashed from his eyes. He ran to a chair, and took from it the portmanteau of the orphans; it contained a little linen, two black dresses, and a small box of white wood, in which were a silk handkerchief that had belonged to their mother, two locks of her hair, and a black ribbon she had worn round her

neck. The little she possessed had been seized by the Russian government, in pursuance of the confiscation. Dagobert searched and researched every article—peeped into all the corners of the portmanteau—still nothing!

This time, completely worn out, leaning against the table, the strong, energetic man felt himself giving way. His face was burning, yet bathed in a cold sweat; his knees trembled under him. It is a common saying, that drowning men will catch at straws; and so it is with the despair that still clings to some shred of hope. Catching at a last chance—absurd, insane, impossible—he turned abruptly toward the orphans and said to them, without considering the alteration in his voice and features: “I did not give them to you—to keep for me?—speak!”

Instead of answering, Rose and Blanche, terrified at his paleness, and the expression of his countenance, uttered a cry. “Good heavens! what is the matter with you?” murmured Rose.

“Have you got them—yes or no?” cried in a voice of thunder the unfortunate, distracted man. “If you have not—I’ll take the first knife I meet with and stick it into my body!”

“Alas! You are so good: pardon

us if we have done anything to afflict you ! You love us so much, you would not do us any harm." The orphans began to weep, as they stretched forth their hands in supplication toward the soldier.

He looked at them with haggard eye, without even seeing them ; till, as the delusion passed away, the reality presented itself to his mind with all its terrible consequences. Then he clasped his hands together, fell on his knees before the bed of the orphans, leaned his forehead upon it, and amid his convulsive sobs—for the man of iron sobbed like a child—these broken words were audible : "Forgive me—forgive !—I do not know how it can be ! Oh ! what a misfortune—what a misfortune ! Forgive me ! "

At this outbreak of grief, the cause of which they understood not, but which in such a man was heart-rending, the two sisters wound their arms about his old gray head, and exclaimed amid their tears : "Look at us ! Only tell us what is the matter with you ?—Is it our fault ? "

At this instant, the noise of footsteps resounded from the stairs, mingled with the barking of Spoilsport, who had remained outside the door. The nearer the steps approached, the more furious

became the barking; it was no doubt accompanied with hostile demonstrations, for the host was heard to cry out in an angry tone: "Hollo! you there! Call off your dog, or speak to him. It is Mr. Burgomaster who is coming up."

"Dagobert—do you hear?—it is the burgomaster," said Rose.

"They are coming upstairs—a number of people," resumed Blanche.

The word *burgomaster* recalled whatever had happened to the mind of Dagobert, and completed, so to express it, the picture of his terrible position. His horse was dead, he had neither papers nor money, and a day, a single day's detention, might defeat the last hope of the sisters, and render useless this long and toilsome journey.

Men of strong minds, and the veteran was of the number, prefer great perils, positions of danger accurately defined, to the vague anxieties which precede a settled misfortune. Guided by his good sense and admirable devotion, Dagobert understood at once that his only resource was now in the justice of the burgomaster, and that all his efforts should tend to conciliate the favor of that magistrate. He therefore dried his eyes with the sheet, rose from the ground, erect, calm, and

resolute, and said to the orphans : “ Fear nothing, my children ; it is our deliverer who is at hand.”

“ Will you call off your dog or no ? ” cried the host, still detained on the stairs by Spoilsport, who, as a vigilant sentinel, continued to dispute the passage. “ Is the animal mad, I say ? Why don’t you tie him up ? Have you not caused trouble enough in my house ? I tell you, that Mr. Burgomaster is waiting to examine you in your turn, for he has finished with Morok.”

Dagobert drew his fingers through his gray locks and across his mustache, clasped the collar of his top-coat, and brushed the sleeves with his hand, in order to give himself the best appearance possible ; for he felt that the fate of the orphans must depend on the result of his interview with the magistrate. It was not without a violent beating of the heart that he laid his hand upon the door knob, saying to the young girls, who were growing more and more frightened by such a succession of events : “ Hide yourselves in your bed, my children ; if any one must needs enter, it shall be the burgomaster alone.”

Thereupon, opening the door, the soldier stepped out on the landing-place, and said : “ Down, Spoilsport ! Here ! ”

The dog obeyed, but with manifest repugnance. His master had to speak twice before he would abstain from all hostile movements toward the host. This latter, with a lantern in one hand and his cap in the other, respectfully preceded the burgomaster, whose magisterial proportions were lost in the half shadows of the staircase. Behind the judge, and a few steps lower, the inquisitive faces of the people belonging to the inn were dimly visible by the light of another lantern.

Dagobert, having turned the dog into the room, shut the door after him, and advanced two steps on the landing-place, which was sufficiently spacious to hold several persons, and had in one corner a wooden bench with a back to it. The burgomaster, as he ascended the last stair, was surprised to see Dagobert close the door of the chamber, as though he wished to forbid his entrance. "Why do you shut that door?" asked he in an abrupt tone.

"First, because two girls, whom I have the charge of, are in bed in that room; secondly, because your examination would alarm them," replied Dagobert. "Sit down upon this bench, Mr. Burgomaster, and examine me here; it will not make any difference, I should think."

“And by what right,” asked the judge, with a displeased air, “do you pretend to dictate to me the place of your examination?”

“Oh, I have no such pretension, Mr. Burgomaster!” said the soldier hastily, fearing above all things to prejudice the judge against him; “only, as the girls are in bed, and already much frightened, it would be a proof of your good heart to examine me where I am.”

“Humph!” said the magistrate, with ill-humor; “a pretty state of things, truly! It was much worth while to disturb me in the middle of the night. But come, so be it; I will examine you here.” Then, turning to the landlord, he added: “Put your lantern upon this bench, and leave us.”

The innkeeper obeyed, and went down, followed by his people, as dissatisfied as they were at being excluded from the examination. The veteran was left alone with the magistrate.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE JUDGMENT.

THE worthy burgomaster of Mockern wore a cloth cap and was enveloped in a cloak. He sat down heavily on the bench. He was a corpulent man, about sixty, with an arrogant, morose countenance; and he frequently rubbed, with his red, fat fist, eyes that were still swollen and blood-shot, from his having been suddenly roused from sleep.

Dagobert stood bareheaded before him, with a submissive, respectful air, holding his old foraging cap in his hands, and trying to read in the sullen physiognomy of his judge what chance there might be to interest him in his favor—that is, in favor of the orphans.

In this critical juncture, the poor soldier summoned to his aid all his presence of mind, reason, eloquence and resolution. He, who had twenty times braved death with the utmost coolness—who, calm and serene, because sincere and tried, had never quailed before the eagle glance of the Emperor, his hero and idol—now felt himself disconcerted and trembling before

the ill-humored face of a village burgo-master. Even so, a few hours before, he had submitted, impassive and resigned, to the insults of the Prophet—that he might not compromise the sacred mission with which a dying mother had intrusted him—thus showing to what a height of heroic abnegation it is possible for a simple and honest heart to attain.

“What have you to say in your justification? Come, be quick!” said the judge roughly, with a yawn of impatience.

“I have not got to justify myself—I have to make a complaint, Mr. Burgomaster,” replied Dagobert in a firm voice.

“Do you think you are to teach me in what terms I am to put my questions?” exclaimed the magistrate, in so sharp a tone that the soldier reproached himself with having begun the interview so badly. Wishing to pacify his judge, he made haste to answer with submission: “Pardon me, Mr. Burgomaster, I have ill-explained my meaning. I only wished to say that I was not wrong in this affair.”

“The Prophet says the contrary.”

“The *Prophet*?” repeated the soldier, with an air of doubt.

“The Prophet is a pious and honest

man," resumed the judge, "incapable of falsehood."

"I cannot say anything upon that subject; but you are too just, and have too good a heart, Mr. Burgomaster, to condemn without hearing me. It is not a man like you that would do an injustice; oh, one can see that at a glance!"

In resigning himself thus to play the part of a courtier, Dagobert softened as much as possible his gruff voice, and strove to give to his austere countenance a smiling, agreeable, and flattering expression. "A man like you," he added, with redoubled suavity of manner, "a respectable judge like you never shuts his ear to one side or the other."

"Ears are not in question, but eyes; and, though mine smart as if I had rubbed them with nettles, I have *seen* the hand of the brute-tamer with a frightful wound on it."

"Yes, Mr. Burgomaster, it is very true; but consider, if he had shut his cages and his door, all this would not have happened."

"Not so; it is your fault. You should have fastened your horse securely to the manger."

"You are right, Mr. Burgomaster, certainly, you are right," said the sol-

dier, in a still more affable and conciliating voice. "It is not for a poor devil like me to contradict you. But supposing my horse was let loose out of pure malice, in order that he might stray into the menagerie—you will then acknowledge that it was *not* my fault. That is, you will acknowledge it if you think fit," hastily added the soldier; "I have no right to dictate to you in anything."

"And why the devil should any one do you this ill turn?"

"I do not know, Mr. Burgomaster—but—"

"You do not know—well, nor I neither," said the Burgomaster, impatiently. "Zounds! what a many words about the carcass of an old horse!"

The countenance of the soldier, losing on a sudden its expression of forced suavity, became once more severe; he answered in a grave voice, full of emotion: "My horse is dead—he is no more than a carcass—that is true; but an hour ago, though very old, he was full of life and intelligence. He neighed joyously at my voice—and, every evening, he licked the hands of the two poor children whom he had carried all the day—as formerly he had carried their mother. Now he will never carry any one again: they will

throw him to the dogs, and all will be finished. You need not have reminded me harshly of it, Mr. Burgomaster—for I loved my horse!”

By these words, pronounced with noble and touching simplicity, the burgomaster was moved in spite of himself, and regretted his hasty speech. “It is natural that you should be sorry for your horse,” said he, in a less impatient tone; “but what is to be done?—It is a misfortune.”

“A misfortune?—Yes, Mr. Burgomaster, a very great misfortune. The girls, who accompany me, were too weak to undertake a long journey on foot, too poor to travel in a carriage—and yet we have to arrive in Paris before the month of February. When their mother died, I promised her to take them to France, for these children have only me to take care of them.”

“You are then their—”

“I am their faithful servant, Mr. Burgomaster; and now that my horse has been killed, what can I do for them? Come, you are good, you have perhaps children of your own: if, one day, they should find themselves in the position of my two little orphans—with no wealth, no resources in the world but an old

soldier who loves them, and an old horse to carry them along—if, after being very unfortunate from their birth—yes, very unfortunate, for my orphans are the daughters of exiles—they should see happiness before them at the end of a journey, and then, by the death of their horse, that journey become impossible—tell me, Mr. Burgomaster, if this would not touch your heart? Would you not find, as I do, that the loss of my horse is irreparable?”

“Certainly,” answered the burgomaster, who was not ill-natured at bottom, and who could not help taking part in Dagobert’s emotion; “I now understand the importance of the loss you have suffered. And then your orphans interest me: how old are they?”

“Fifteen years and two months. They are twins.”

“Fifteen years and two months—that is about the age of my Frederica.”

“You have a young lady of that age,” cried Dagobert, once more awaking to hope; “ah, Mr. Burgomaster! I am really no longer uneasy about my poor children. You will do us justice.”

“To do justice is my duty. After all, in this affair, the faults are about equal on both sides. You tied up your horse

badly, and the brute-tamer left his door open. He says: 'I am wounded in the hand.' You answer: 'My horse has been killed—and, for a thousand reasons, the loss of my horse is irreparable.'"

"You make me speak better than I could ever speak on my own account, Mr. Burgomaster," said the soldier, with a humble insinuating smile; "but 'tis what I meant to express—and, as you say yourself, Mr. Burgomaster, my horse being my whole fortune, it is only fair—"

"Exactly so," resumed the magistrate, interrupting the soldier; "your reasons are excellent. The Prophet—who is a good and pious man withal—has related the facts to me in his own way; and then, you see, he is an old acquaintance. We are nearly all zealous Catholics here, and he sells to our wives such cheap and edifying little books, with chaplets and amulets of the best manufacture at less than the prime cost. All this, you will say, has nothing to do with the affair; and you will be right in saying so: still I must needs confess that I came here with the intention—"

"Of deciding against me, eh, Mr. Burgomaster?" said Dagobert, gaining more and more confidence. "You see, you

were not quite awake, and your justice had only one eye open."

"Really, master soldier," answered the judge, with good humor, "it is not unlikely; for I did not conceal from Morok that I would give it in his favor. Then he said to me (very generously, by the way): 'Since you condemn my adversary, I will not aggravate his position by telling you certain things—'"

"What! against me?"

"Apparently so: but, like a generous enemy, when I told him that I should most likely condemn you to pay him damages, he said no more about it. For I will not hide from you that, before I heard your reasons, I fully intended that you should make compensation for the Prophet's wound."

"See, Mr. Burgomaster, how the most just and able persons are subject to be deceived," said Dagobert, becoming once more the courtier; then, trying to assume a prodigiously knowing look, he added: "But such persons find out the truth at last, and are not to be made dupes of, whatever *prophets* may say."

This poor attempt at a jest—the first and only one, perhaps, that Dagobert had ever been guilty of—will show the extremity to which he was reduced, and

the desperate efforts of all kinds he was making to conciliate the good graces of his judge. The burgomaster did not at first see the pleasantry; he was only led to perceive it by the self-satisfied mien of Dagobert and by his inquiring glance, which seemed to say: "Is it not good, eh?—I am astonished at it myself."

The magistrate began, therefore, to smile with a patronizing air, and, nodding his head, replied in the same jocular spirit: "Ha! ha! ha! you are right; the Prophet is out in his prophecy. You shall not pay him any damages. The faults on both sides are equal, and the injuries balance one another. He has been wounded, your horse has been killed; so you may cry quits, and have done with it."

"But how much, then, do you think he owes me?" asked the soldier, with singular simplicity.

"How much?"

"Yes, Mr. Burgomaster, what sum will he have to pay me. Yes—but, before you decide, I must tell you one thing, Mr. Burgomaster. I think I shall be entitled to spend only part of the money in buying a horse. I am sure, that, in the environs of Leipsic, I could get a beast very cheap from some of the peasants; and, between ourselves, I will own to you, that, if I

could meet with only a nice little donkey—I should not be overparticular—I should even like it just as well: for, after my poor Jovial, the company of another horse would be painful to me. I must also tell you—”

“Hey-day!” cried the Burgomaster, interrupting Dagobert, “of what money, what donkey, and what other horse are you talking? I tell you, that you owe nothing to the Prophet, and that he owes you nothing!”

“He owes me nothing?”

“You are very dull of comprehension, my good man. I repeat, that, if the Prophet’s animals have killed your horse, the Prophet himself has been badly wounded; so you may cry quits. In other words, you owe him nothing, and he owes you nothing. Now do you understand?”

Dagobert, confounded, remained for some moments without answering, while he looked at the burgomaster with an expression of deep anguish. He saw that his judgment would again destroy all his hopes.

“But, Mr. Burgomaster,” resumed he, in an agitated voice, “you are too just not to pay attention to one thing; the wound of the brute-tamer does not prevent him from continuing his trade; the death

of my horse prevents me from continuing my journey; therefore, he ought to indemnify me."

The judge considered he had already done a good deal for Dagobert, in not making him responsible for the wound of the Prophet, who, as we have already said, exercised a certain influence over the Catholics of the country by the sale of his devotional treasures, and also from its being known that he was supported by some persons of eminence. The soldier's pertinacity, therefore, offended the magistrate, who, reassuming his lofty air, replied, in a chilling tone: "You will make me repent my impartiality. How is this? instead of thanking me, you ask for more."

"But, Mr. Burgomaster, I ask only for what is just. I wish I were wounded in the hand, like the Prophet, so that I could but continue my journey."

"We are not talking of what you wish. I have pronounced sentence—there is no more to say."

"But, Mr. Burgomaster—"

"Enough, enough. Let us go to the next subject. Your papers?"

"Yes, we will speak about my papers; but I beg of you, Mr. Burgomaster, to have pity on those two children. Let us

have the means to continue our journey, and—”

“I have done all I could for you—perhaps, more than I ought. Once again, your papers!”

“I must first explain to you—”

“No explanation—your papers!—Or would you like me to have you arrested as a vagabond?”

“Me—arrested!”

“I tell you that, if you refuse to show me your papers, it will be as if you had none. Now, those people who have no papers we take into custody till the authorities can dispose of them. Let me see your papers, and make haste!—I am in a hurry to get home.”

Dagobert's position was the more distressing, as for a moment he had indulged in sanguine hope. The last blow was now added to all the veteran had suffered since the commencement of the scene, which was as cruel as well as dangerous trial, for a man of his character—upright, but obstinate—faithful, but rough and absolute—a man who, for a long time a soldier, and a victorious one, had acquired a certain despotic manner of treating with civilians.

At these words—“your papers,” Dagobert became very pale; but he tried to

conceal his anguish beneath an air of assurance, which he thought best calculated to gain the magistrate's good opinion. "I will tell you all about it, Mr. Burgomaster," said he. "Nothing can be clearer. Such a thing might happen to any one. I do not look like a beggar and a vagabond, do I? And yet—you will understand that an honest man who travels with two young girls—"

"No more words! Your papers!"

At this juncture two powerful auxiliaries arrived to the soldier's aid. The orphans, growing more and more uneasy, and hearing Dagobert still talking upon the landing-place, had risen and dressed themselves; so that just at the instant when the magistrate said in a rough voice—"No more words! Your papers!"—Rose and Blanche, holding each other by the hand, came forth from the chamber.

At sight of those charming faces, which their poor mourning vestments only rendered more interesting, the burgomaster rose from his seat, struck with surprise and admiration. By a spontaneous movement, each sister took a hand of Dagobert and pressed close to him, while they regarded the magistrate with looks of mingled anxiety and candor.

It was so touching a picture, this of the

old soldier presenting as it were to his judge the graceful children, with countenances full of innocence and beauty, that the burgomaster, by a sudden reaction, found himself once more disposed to sentiments of pity. Dagobert perceived it; and, still holding the orphans by the hand, he advanced toward him, and said in a feeling voice: "Look at these poor children, Mr. Burgomaster! Could I show you a better passport?" And, overcome by so many painful sensations—restrained, yet following each other in quick succession—Dagobert felt, in spite of himself, that the tears were starting to his eyes.

Though naturally rough, and rendered still more testy by the interruption of his sleep, the burgomaster was not quite deficient in sense or feeling. He perceived at once that a man thus accompanied ought not to inspire great distrust. "Poor dear children!" said he, as he examined them with growing interest; "orphans so young, and they come from far—"

"From the heart of Siberia, Mr. Burgomaster, where their mother was an exile before their birth. It is now more than five months that we have been traveling on by short stages—hard enough, you will say, for children of

their age. It is for them that I ask your favor and support—for them, against whom everything seems to combine to-day—for, only just now, when I went to look for my papers, I could not find in my knapsack the portfolio in which they were, along with my purse and cross—for you must know, Mr. Burgomaster—pardon me, if I say it—'tis not from vain-glory—but I was decorated by the hand of the Emperor; and a man whom he decorated with his own hand, you see, could not be so bad a fellow, though he may have had the misfortune to lose his papers—and his purse. That's what has happened to me, and made me so pressing about the damages."

"How and where did you suffer this loss?"

"I do not know, Mr. Burgomaster; I am sure that the evening before last, at bed-time, I took a little money out of the purse, and saw the portfolio in its place; yesterday I had small change sufficient, and did not undo the knapsack."

"And where then has the knapsack been kept?"

"In the room occupied by the children; but this night—"

Dagobert was here interrupted by the tread of some one mounting the stairs: it

was the Prophet. Concealed in the shadow of the staircase, he had listened to this conversation, and he dreaded lest the weakness of the burgomaster should mar the complete success of his projects.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE DECISION.

MOROK, who wore his left arm in a sling, having slowly ascended the staircase, saluted the burgomaster respectfully. At sight of the repulsive countenance of the lion-tamer, Rose and Blanche, affrighted, drew back a step nearer to the soldier. The brow of the latter grew dark, for he felt his blood boil against Morok, the cause of all his difficulties—though he was yet ignorant that Goliath, at the instigation of the Prophet, had stolen his portfolio and papers.

“What do you want, Morok?” said the burgomaster, with an air half friendly and half displeased. “I told the landlord that I did not wish to be interrupted.”

“I have come to render you a service, Mr. Burgomaster.”

“A service?”

“Yes, a service; or I should not have ventured to disturb you. My conscience reproaches me.”

“Your conscience?”

“Yes, Mr. Burgomaster, it reproaches me for not having told you all that I had to tell about this man; a false pity led me astray.”

“Well, but what have you to tell?”

Morok approached the judge and spoke to him for some time in a low voice. At first apparently much astonished, the burgomaster became by degrees deeply attentive and anxious; every now and then he allowed some exclamation of surprise or doubt to escape him, while he glanced covertly at the group formed by Dagobert and the two young girls. By the expression of his countenance, which grew every moment more unquiet, severe, and searching, it was easy to perceive that the interest which the magistrate had felt for the orphans and for the soldier was gradually changed, by the secret communications of the Prophet, into a sentiment of distrust and hostility.

Dagobert saw this sudden revolution, and his fears, which had been appeased for an instant, returned with redoubled force; Rose and Blanche, confused, and not understanding the object of this mute scene, looked at the soldier with increased perplexity.

“The devil!” said the burgomaster,

rising abruptly ; “all this never occurred to me. What could I have been thinking of? But you see, Morok, when one is roused up in the middle of the night, one has not always presence of mind. You said well : it is a great service you came to render me.”

“I assert nothing positively, but—”

“No matter ; ’tis a thousand to one that you are right.”

“It is only a suspicion founded upon divers circumstances ; but even a suspicion—”

“May give you scent of the truth. And here was I, going like a gull into the snare ! Once more, what could I have been thinking of ? ”

“It is so difficult to be on guard against certain appearances.”

“You need not tell me so, my dear Morok, you need not tell me so.”

During this mysterious conversation, Dagobert was on thorns ; he saw vaguely that a violent storm was about to burst. He thought only of how he should still keep his anger within bounds.

Morok again approached the judge, and glancing at the orphans, recommenced speaking in a low voice. “Oh ! ” cried the burgomaster, with indignation, “you go too far now.”

“I affirm nothing,” said Morok, hastily; “it is a mere supposition founded on—” and he again brought his lips close to the ear of the judge.

“After all, why not?” resumed the magistrate, lifting up his hands; “such people are capable of anything. He says that he brings them from the heart of Siberia: why may not all this prove to be a tissue of impudent falsehoods? But I am not to be made a dupe twice,” cried the burgomaster, in an angry tone, for, like all persons of a weak and shifting character, he was without pity for those whom he thought capable of having beguiled his compassion.

“Do not be in a hurry to decide—don’t give to my words more weight than they deserve,” resumed Morok with a hypocritical affectation of humility. “I am unhappily placed in so false a position with regard to this man”—pointing to Dago-bert—“that I might be thought to have acted from private resentment for the injury he has done me; perhaps I may so act without knowing it, while I fancy that I am only influenced by love of justice, horror of falsehood, and respect for our holy religion. Well—who lives long enough will know—and may Heaven forgive me if I am deceived! In any case, the law will

pronounce upon it; and if they should prove innocent, they will be released in a month or two."

"And for that reason, I need not hesitate. It is a mere measure of precaution; they will not die of it. Besides, the more I think of it, the more it seems probable. Yes, this man is doubtless a French spy or agitator, especially when I compare these suspicions with the late demonstration of the students at Frankfort."

"And, upon that theory, nothing is better fitted to excite and stir up those hot-headed youths than—" He glanced significantly at the two sisters; then, after a pause, he added with a sigh, "Satan does not care by what means he works out his ends!"

"Certainly, it would be odious, but well devised."

"And then, Mr. Burgomaster, look at him attentively: you will see that this man has a dangerous face. You will see—"

In continuing thus to speak in a low tone, Morok had evidently pointed to Dagobert. The latter, notwithstanding his self-command, felt that the restraint he had imposed upon himself, since his arrival at this unlucky inn, and above all since the commencement of the conversa-

tion between Morok and the burgomaster, was becoming no longer bearable; besides, he saw clearly that all his efforts to conciliate the favor of the judge were rendered completely null by the fatal influence of the brute-tamer; so, losing patience, he advanced toward him with his arms folded on his breast, and said to him in a subdued voice: "Was it of me that you were whispering to Mr. Burgomaster?"

"Yes," said Morok; looking fixedly at him.

"Why did you not speak out loud?" Having said this, the almost convulsive movement of his thick mustache, as he stood looking Morok full in the face, gave evidence of a severe internal conflict. Seeing that his adversary preserved a contemptuous silence, he repeated in a sterner voice: "I ask you why you did not speak out loud to Mr. Burgomaster, when you were talking of me?"

"Because there are some things so shameful that one would blush to utter them aloud," answered Morok, insolently.

Till then Dagobert had kept his arms folded; he now extended them violently, clenching his fists. This sudden movement was so expressive that the two sis-

ters uttered a cry of terror, and drew closer to him.

“Hark ye, Mr. Burgomaster!” said the soldier, grinding his teeth with rage, “bid that man go down, or I will not answer for myself!”

“What!” said the Burgomaster, haughtily; “do you dare to give orders to me?”

“I tell you to make that man go down,” resumed Dagobert, quite beside himself, “or there will be mischief!”

“Dagobert!—good heaven!—be calm,” cried the children, grasping his hands.

“It becomes you, certainly—miserable vagabond that you are—not to say worse,” returned the burgomaster in a rage: “it becomes you to give orders to me! Oh! you think to impose upon me, by telling me you have lost your papers! It will not serve your turn, for which you carry about with you these two girls, who, in spite of their innocent looks, are perhaps, after all—”

“Wretch!” cried Dagobert, with so terrible a voice and gesture that the official did not dare to finish. Taking the children by the arm before they could speak a word, the soldier pushed them back into the chamber; then, locking the door, and putting the key into his pocket, he returned precipitately toward the bur-

gomaster, who, frightened at the menacing air and attitude of the veteran, retreated a couple of steps, and held by one hand to the rail of the staircase.

"Listen to me!" said the soldier, seizing the judge by the arm. "Just now, that scoundrel insulted me—I bore with it—for it only concerned myself. I have heard patiently all your idle talk, because you seemed for a moment to interest yourself in those poor children. But since you have neither soul, nor pity, nor justice—I tell you that, burgomaster though you are—I will spurn you as I would spurn that dog," pointing again to the Prophet, "if you have the misfortune to mention those two young girls in any other way than you would speak of your own child! Now, do you mark me?"

"What!—do you dare to say," cried the burgomaster, stammering with rage, "that if I happen to mention two adventures—"

"Hats off!—when you speak of the daughters of the Duke of Ligny," cried the soldier, snatching the cap of the burgomaster and flinging it on the ground. On this act of aggression, Morok could not restrain his joy. Exasperated and losing all hope, Dagobert had at length yielded to the violence of his anger, after strug-

gling so painfully against it for some hours.

When the burgomaster saw his cap at his feet, he looked at the brute-tamer with an air of stupefaction, as if he hesitated to believe so great an enormity. Dagobert, regretting his violence, and feeling that no means of conciliation now remained, threw a rapid glance around him, and, retreating several paces, gained the topmost steps of the staircase. The burgomaster stood near the bench, in a corner of the landing place, while Morok, with his arm in the sling, to give the more serious appearance to his wound, was close beside him. "So!" cried the magistrate, deceived by the backward movement of Dagobert, "you think to escape, after daring to lift hand against me! Old villain!"

"Forgive me, Mr. Burgomaster! It was a burst of rashness that I was not able to control. I am sorry for it," said Dagobert, in a repentant voice, and hanging his head humbly.

"No pity for thee, rascal! You would begin again to smooth me over with your coaxing ways, but I have penetrated your secret designs. You are not what you appear to be, and there is perhaps an affair of state at the bottom of all this,"

added the magistrate in a very diplomatic tone. "All means are alike to those who wish to set Europe in flames."

"I am only a poor devil, Mr. Burgomaster; you, that have a good heart, will show me some mercy."

"What! when you have pulled off my cap?"

"And you," added the soldier, turning toward Morok, "you, that have been the cause of all this—have some pity upon me—do not bear malice! You, a holy man, speak a word in my favor to Mr. Burgomaster."

"I have spoken to him what I was bound to speak," answered the Prophet, ironically.

"Oho! you can look foolish enough now, you old vagabond! Did you think to impose on me with lamentations?" resumed the burgomaster, advancing toward Dagobert. "Thanks be, I am no longer your dupe! You shall see that we have good dungeous at Leipsic for French agitators and female vagrants, for your damsels are no better than you are. Come," added he, puffing out his cheeks with an important air, "go down before me—and as for you, Morok—"

The burgomaster was unable to finish. For some minutes Dagobert had only

sought to gain time, and had cast many a side-glance at a half-open door on the landing-place, just opposite to the chamber occupied by the orphans: finding the moment favorable, he now rushed quick as lightning on the burgomaster, seized him by the throat, and dashed him with such violence against the door in question that the magistrate, stupefied by this sudden attack, and unable to speak a word or utter a cry, rolled over to the further end of the room, which was completely dark. Then, turning toward Morok, who, with his arm encumbered by the sling, made a rush for the staircase, the soldier caught him by his long, streaming hair, pulled him back, clasped him with hands of iron, clapped his hand over his mouth to stifle his outcries, and notwithstanding his desperate resistance, dragged him into the chamber, on the floor of which the burgomaster lay bruised and stunned.

Having double locked the door, and put the key in his pocket, Dagobert descended the stairs at two bounds, and found himself in a passage that opened on the courtyard. The gate of the inn was shut, and there was no possibility of escape on that side. The rain fell in torrents. He could see through the window of a parlor, in

which a fire was burning, the host and his people waiting for the decision of the burgomaster. To bolt the door of the passage, and thus intercept all communication with the yard, was for the soldier the affair of an instant, and he hastened upstairs again to rejoin the orphans.

Morok, recovering from his surprise, was calling for help with all his might; but, even if the distance had permitted him to be heard, the noise of the wind and rain would have drowned his outcries. Dagobert had about an hour before him, for it would require some time to elapse before the length of his interview with the magistrate would excite astonishment; and, suspicion or fear once awakened, it would be necessary to break open two doors—that which separated the passage from the court-yard and that of the room in which the burgomaster and the Prophet were confined.

“My children, it is now time to prove that you have a soldier’s blood in your veins,” said Dagobert, as he entered abruptly the chamber of the young girls, who were terrified at the racket they had heard for some minutes.

“Good heaven, Dagobert! what has happened?” cried Blanche.

“What do you wish us to do?” added Rose.

Without answering, the soldier ran to the bed, tore off the sheets, tied them strongly together, made a knot at one end, passed it over the top of the left half of the casement, and so shut it in. Thus made fast by the size of the knot, which could not slip through, the sheets, floating on the outside, touched the ground. The second half of the window was left open, to afford a passage to the fugitives.

The veteran next took his knapsack, the children's portmanteau, and the reindeer pelisse, and threw them all out of the window, making a sign to Spoilsport to follow, to watch over them. The dog did not hesitate, but disappeared at a single bound. Rose and Blanche looked at Dagobert in amazement, without uttering a word.

“Now, children,” said he to them, “the doors of the inn are shut, and it is by this way,” pointing to the window, “that we must pass—if we would not be arrested, put in prison—you in one place, and I in the other—and have our journey altogether knocked on the head.”

“Arrested! put in prison!” cried Rose.

“Separated from you!” exclaimed Blanche.

“Yes, my poor children! They have

killed Jovial—we must make our escape on foot, and try to reach Leipsic—when you are tired, I will carry you, and, though I have to beg my way, we will go through with it. But a quarter of an hour later, and all will be lost. Come, children, have trust in me—show that the daughters of General Simon are no cowards—and there is yet hope.”

By a sympathetic movement, the sisters joined hands, as though they would meet the danger united. Their sweet faces, pale from the effect of so many painful emotions, were now expressive of simple resolve, founded on the blind faith they reposed in the devotion of the soldier.

“Be satisfied, Dagobert! we’ll not be frightened,” said Rose, in a firm voice.

“We will do what must be done,” added Blanche, in a no less resolute tone.

“I was sure of it,” cried Dagobert; “good blood is ever thicker than water. Come! you are light as feathers, the sheet is strong, it is hardly eight feet to the ground, and the pup is waiting for you.”

“It is for me to go first—I am the eldest for to-day,” cried Rose, when she had tenderly embraced Blanche; and she ran to the window, in order, if there were any danger, to expose herself to it before her sister.

Dagobert easily guessed the cause of this eagerness. "Dear children!" said he, "I understand you. But fear nothing for one another—there is no danger. I have myself fastened the sheet. Quick, my little Rose!"

As light as a bird, the young girl mounted the ledge of the window, and, assisted by Dagobert, took hold of the sheet, and slid gently down according to the recommendation of the soldier, who, leaning out his whole body, encouraged her with his voice.

"Don't be afraid, sister!" said she, as soon as she touched the ground; "it is very easy to come down this way. And Spoilsport is here, licking my hands." Blanche did not long keep her waiting; as courageous as her sister, she descended with the same success.

"Dear little creatures! what have they done to be so unfortunate? Thousand thunders! there must be a curse upon the family," cried Dagobert, as, with heavy heart, he saw the pale, sweet face of the young girl disappear amid the gloom of the dark night, which violent squalls of wind and torrents of rain rendered still more dismal.

"Dagobert, we are waiting for you; come quickly!" said the orphans in a

low voice, from beneath the window. Thanks to his tall stature, the soldier rather leaped than glided to the ground.

Dagobert and the two young girls had not fled from the inn of the White Falcon more than a quarter of an hour, when a long crash resounded through the house. The door had yielded to the efforts of the burgomaster and Morok, who had made use of a heavy table as a battering-ram. Guided by the light, they ran to the chamber of the orphans, now deserted. Morok saw the sheets floating from the casement, and cried: "Mr. Burgomaster, they have escaped by the window—they are on foot—in this dark and stormy night, they cannot be far."

"No doubt we shall catch them, the miserable tramps! Oh, I will be revenged! Quick, Morok; your honor is concerned as well as mine."

"My honor? Much more is concerned than that, Mr. Burgomaster," answered the Prophet, in a tone of great irritation. Then, rapidly descending the stairs, he opened the door of the court-yard, and shouted in a voice of thunder: "Goliath! unchain the dogs!—and, landlord! bring us lanterns, torches—arm your people—open the doors! We must pursue the fugitives; they cannot escape us; we must have them—*alive or dead!*"

CHAPTER XV.

THE DISPATCHES.

“WHEN we read, in the rules of the order of the Jesuits, under the title *De formulâ scribendi* (Institut. 2, 11, pp. 125–129), the development of the 8th part of the constitutions, we are appalled by the number of letters, narratives, registers, and writings of all kinds, preserved in the archives of the society.

“It is a police infinitely more exact and better informed than has ever been that of any state. Even the government of Venice found itself surpassed by the Jesuits: when it drove them out in 1606, it seized all their papers, and reproached them for *their great and laborious curiosity*. This police, this secret inquisition, carried to such a degree of perfection, may give some idea of the strength of a government, so well-informed, so persevering in its projects, so powerful by its unity, and, as the constitutions have it, by the *union of its members*. It is not hard to understand, what immense force must belong to the heads of

this society, and how the general of the Jesuits could say to the Duke de Brissac: *'From this room, your grace, I govern not only Paris, but China—not only China, but the whole world—and all without any one knowing how it is done.'*”

(CONSTITUTION OF THE JESUITS, edited by PAULIN, Paris, 1843.)

MOROK, the lion-tamer, seeing Dagobert deprived of his horse, and stripped of his money and papers, and thinking it was thus out of his power to continue his journey, had, previous to the arrival of the burgomaster, dispatched Karl to Leipsic, as the bearer of a letter which he was to put immediately into the post. The address of this letter was as follows: “A Monsieur Rodin, Rue du Milieu des Ursins, Paris.”

About the middle of this obscure and solitary street, situated below the level of the Quai Napoleon, which it joins not far from the Rue Saint Landry, there stood a house of unpretentious appearance, at the bottom of a dark and narrow court-yard, separated from the street by a low building in front, with arched doorway, and two windows protected by thick iron bars. Nothing could be more simple than the interior of this quiet dwelling,

as was sufficiently shown by the furniture of a pretty large room on the ground floor. The walls of this apartment were lined with old gray wainscot; the tiled floor was painted red and carefully polished; curtains of white calico shaded the windows.

A sphere of about four feet in diameter, raised on a pedestal of massive oak, stood at one end of the room, opposite to the fire-place. Upon this globe, which was painted on a large scale, a host of little red crosses appeared scattered over all parts of the world—from the North to the South, from the rising to the setting sun, from the most barbarous countries, from the most distant isles, to the centers of civilization, to France itself. There was not a single country which did not present some spots marked with these red crosses, evidently indicative of stations, or serving as points of reference.

Before a table of black wood, loaded with papers, and resting against the wall near the chimney, a chair stood empty. Further on, between the two windows, was a large walnut-wood desk, surmounted by shelves full of pasteboard boxes.

At the end of the month of October, 1831, about eight o'clock in the morning, a man sat writing at this desk. This was

M. Rodin, the correspondent of Morok, the brute-tamer.

About fifty years of age, he wore an old, shabby, olive greatcoat, with a greasy collar, a snuff-powdered cotton handkerchief for a cravat, and waistcoat and trousers of threadbare black cloth. His feet, buried in loose varnished shoes, rested on a petty piece of green baize upon the red, polished floor. His gray hair lay flat on his temples, and encircled his bald forehead; his eyebrows were scarcely marked; his upper eyelid, flabby and overhanging, like the membrane which shades the eyes of reptiles, half concealed his small, sharp, black eye. His thin lips, absolutely colorless, were hardly distinguishable from the wan hue of his lean visage, with its pointed nose and chin; and this livid mask (deprived as it were of lips) appeared only the more singular from its maintaining a death-like immobility. Had it not been for the rapid movement of his fingers, as, bending over the desk, he scratched along with his pen, M. Rodin might have been mistaken for a corpse.

By the aid of a *cipher* (or secret alphabet) placed before him, he was copying certain passages from a long sheet full of writing, in a manner quite unintelligible

to those who did not possess the key to the system. While the darkness of the day increased the gloom of the large, cold, naked-looking apartment, there was something awful in the chilling aspect of this man, tracing his mysterious characters in the midst of profound silence.

The clock struck eight. The dull sound of the knocker at the outer door was heard, then a bell tinkled twice, several doors opened and shut, and a new personage entered the chamber. On seeing him, M. Rodin rose from the desk, stuck his pen between his teeth, bowed with a deeply submissive air, and sat down again to his work without uttering a word.

The two formed a striking contrast to one another. The new comer, though really older than he seemed, would have passed for thirty-six or thirty-eight years of age at most. His figure was tall and shapely, and few could have encountered the brightness of his large gray eye, brilliant as polished steel. His nose, broad at the commencement, formed a well-cut square at its termination; his chin was prominent, and the bluish tints of his close-shaved beard were contrasted with the bright carnation of his lips, and the whiteness of his fine teeth. When he took off his hat, to change it for a black velvet

cap which he found on the small table, he displayed a quantity of light chestnut hair, not yet silvered by time. He was dressed in a long frock-coat, buttoned up to the neck in military fashion.

The piercing glance and broad forehead of this man revealed a powerful intellect, even as the development of his chest and shoulders announced a vigorous physical organization; while his gentlemanly appearance, the perfection of his gloves and boots, the light perfume which hung about his hair and person, the grace and ease of his least movements, betrayed what is called the man of the world, and left the impression that he had sought or might still seek every kind of success, from the most frivolous to the most serious. This rare combination of strength of mind, strength of body, and extreme elegance of manners, was in this instance rendered still more striking by the circumstance, that whatever there might be of haughtiness or command in the upper part of that energetic countenance was softened down and tempered by a constant but not uniform smile—for, as occasion served, this smile became either kind or sly, cordial or gay, discreet or prepossessing, and thus augmented the insinuating charm of this man, who, once seen, was never again

forgotten. But, in yielding to this involuntary sympathy, the doubt occurred if the influence was for good—or for evil.

M. Rodin, the secretary of the new comer, continued to write.

“Are there any letters from Dunkirk, Rodin?” inquired his master.

“Post not yet in.”

“Without being positively uneasy as to my mother’s health, since she was already convalescent,” resumed the other, “I shall only be quite reassured by a letter from my excellent friend, the Princess de Saint-Dizier. I shall have good news this morning, I hope.”

“It is to be desired,” said the secretary, as humble and submissive as he was laconic and impassible.

“Certainly it is to be desired,” resumed his master; “for one of the brightest days of my life was when the Princess de Saint-Dizier announced to me that this sudden and dangerous illness had yielded to the care and attention with which she surrounds my mother. Had it not been for that, I must have gone down to her instantly, though my presence here is very necessary.”

Then, approaching the desk, he added: “Is the summary of the foreign correspondence complete?”

“Here is the analysis.”

“The letters are still sent under envelope to the places named, and are then brought here as I directed?”

“Always.”

“Read to me the notes of this correspondence; if there are any letters for me to answer, I will tell you.” And Rodin’s master began to walk up and down the room, with his hands crossed behind his back, dictating observations of which Rodin took careful note.

The secretary turned to a pretty large pile of papers, and thus began:

“Don Raymond Olivarez acknowledges from Cadiz receipt of letter No. 19; he will conform to it, and deny all share in the abduction.”

“Very well; file it.”

“Count Romanoff, of Riga, finds himself in a position of pecuniary embarrassment.”

“Let Duplessis send him fifty louis; I formerly served as captain in his regiment, and he has since given us good information.”

“They have received at Philadelphia the last cargo of Histories of France, expurgated for the use of the faithful; they require some more of the same sort.”

“Take note of it, and write to Duplessis. Go on.”

“M. Spindler sends from Namur the secret report on M. Ardouin.”

“To be examined.”

“Doctor Van Ostadt, of the same town, sends a confidential note on the subject of Messrs. Spindler and Ardouin.”

“To be compared. . Go on.”

“Count Malipierri, of Turin, announces that the donation of 300,000 francs is signed.”

“Inform Duplessis. What next?”

“Don Stanislaus has just quitted the waters of Baden with Queen Marie Ernestine. He informs us that her majesty will receive with gratitude the promised advices, and will answer them with her own hand.”

“Make a note of it. I will myself write to the queen.”

While Rodin was inscribing a few remarks on the margin of the paper, his master, continuing to walk up and down the room, found himself opposite to the globe marked with little red crosses, and stood contemplating it for a moment with a pensive air.

Rodin continued: “In consequence of the state of the public mind in certain parts of Italy, where sundry agitators

have turned their eyes in the direction of France, Father Orsini writes from Milan that it would be of importance to distribute profusely in that country some little book, in which the French would be represented as impious and debauched, rapacious and bloody."

"The idea is excellent. We might turn to good account the excesses committed by our troops in Italy during the wars of the Republic. You must employ Jacques Dumoulin to write it. He is full of gall, spite, and venom; the pamphlet will be scorching. Besides, I may furnish a few notes; but you must not pay Dumoulin till after the delivery of the manuscript."

"That is well understood; for, if we were to pay him beforehand, he would be drunk for a week in some low den. It was thus we had to pay him twice over for his virulent attack on the pantheistic tendencies of Professor Martin's philosophy."

"Take note of it—and go on."

"The merchant announces that the clerk is about to send the banker to give in his accounts. You understand?" added Rodin, after pronouncing these words with a marked emphasis.

"Perfectly," said the other, with a

start; "they are but the expressions agreed on. What next?"

"But the clerk," continued the secretary, "is restrained by a last scruple."

After a moment's silence, during which the features of Rodin's master worked strongly, he thus resumed: "They must continue to act on the clerk's mind by silence and solitude; then, let him read once more the list of cases in which regicide is authorized and absolved. Go on!"

"The woman Sydney writes from Dresden that she waits for instructions. Violent scenes of jealousy on her account have again taken place between the father and son; but neither from these new bursts of mutual hatred, nor from the confidential communications which each has made to her against his rival, has she yet been able to glean the information required. Hitherto, she has avoided giving the preference to one or the other; but, should this situation be prolonged, she fears it may rouse their suspicions. Which ought she then to choose—the father or the son?"

"The son—for jealous resentment will be much more violent and cruel in the old man, and, to revenge himself for the preference bestowed upon his son, he will

perhaps tell what they have both such an interest to conceal. The next ? ”

“ Within the last three years two maid servants of Ambrosius, whom we placed in that little parish in the mountains of the Valais, have disappeared, without any one knowing what has become of them. A third has just met with the same fate. The Protestants of the country are roused — talk of murder with frightful attendant circumstances—”

“ Until there is proof positive and complete of the fact, Ambrosius must be defended against these infamous calumnies, the work of a party that never shrinks from monstrous inventions. Go on ! ”

“ Thompson, of Liverpool, has at length succeeded in procuring for Justin the place of agent or manager to Lord Stewart, a rich Irish Catholic, whose head grows daily weaker.”

“ Let the fact be at once verified, and Thompson shall have a premium of fifty louis. Make a note of it for Duplessis. Proceed.”

“ Frantz Dichstein, of Vienna,” resumed Rodin, “ announces that his father has just died of the cholera, in a little village at some leagues from that city ; for the epidemic continues to advance, com-

ing from the north of Russia by way of Poland."

"It is true," said Rodin's master, interrupting him; "may its terrible march be stayed, and France be spared."

"Frantz Dichstein," resumed Rodin, "says that his two brothers are determined to contest the donation made by his father, but that he is of an opposite opinion."

"Consult the two persons that are charged with all matters of litigation. What next?"

"The Cardinal Prince d'Amalfi will conform to the three first points of the proposal; he demands to make a reservation upon the fourth point."

"No reserve!—Either full and absolute acceptance—or else war—and (mark me well!) war without mercy—on him and his creatures. Go on!"

"Fra Paolo announces that the Prince Boccari, chief of a redoubtable secret society, in despair at seeing his friends accuse him of treachery, in consequence of suspicions excited in their minds by Fra Paolo himself, has committed suicide."

"Boccari! is it possible?" cried Rodin's master. "Boccari! the patriot Boccari! so dangerous a person!"

"The patriot Boccari," repeated the impassible secretary.

"Tell Duplessis to send an order for five-and-twenty louis to Fra Paolo. Make a note of it."

"Hausman informs us that the French dancer, Albertine Ducornet, is the mistress of the reigning prince; she has the most complete influence over him, and it would be easy through her means to arrive at the end proposed, but that she is herself governed by her lover (condemned in France as a forger), and that she does nothing without consulting him."

"Let Hausman get hold of this man—if his claims are reasonable, accede to them—and learn if the girl has any relations in Paris."

"The Duke d'Orbano announces that the king his master will authorize the new establishment, but on the conditions previously stated."

"No conditions — either a frank adhesion or a positive refusal. Let us know our friends from our enemies. The more unfavorable the circumstances, the more we must show firmness, and overbear opposition by confidence in ourselves."

"The same also announces that the whole of the corps diplomatique continues to support the claims of the father of that

young Protestant girl who refuses to quit the convent where she has taken refuge, unless it be to marry her lover against her father's will."

"Ah! the corps diplomatique continues to remonstrate in the father's name?"

"Yes."

"Then, continue to answer that the spiritual power has nothing to do with the temporal."

At this moment, the bell of the outer door again sounded twice.

"See who it is," said Rodin's master; and the secretary rose and left the room. The other continued to walk thoughtfully up and down, till, coming near to the huge globe, he stopped short before it.

For some time he contemplated, in profound silence, the innumerable little red crosses, which appeared to cover, as with an immense net, all the countries of the earth. Reflecting doubtless on the invisible action of his power, which seemed to extend over the whole world, the features of this man became animated, his large gray eye sparkled, his nostrils swelled, and his manly countenance assumed an indescribable expression of pride, energy, and daring. With haughty brow and scornful lip, he drew still nearer to the

globe, and leaned his strong hand upon the pole.

This powerful pressure, an imperious movement, as of one taking possession, seemed to indicate that he felt sure of governing this globe, on which he looked down from the height of his tall figure, and on which he rested his hand with so lofty and audacious an air of sovereignty.

But now he no longer smiled. His eye threatened, and his large forehead was clad with a formidable scowl. The artist, who had wished to paint the demon of craft and pride, the infernal genius of insatiable domination, could not have chosen a more suitable model.

When Rodin returned, the face of his master had recovered its ordinary expression. "It is the postman," said Rodin, showing the letters which he held in his hand; "there is nothing from Dunkirk."

"Nothing?" cried his master—and his painful emotion formed a strange contrast to his late haughty and implacable expression of countenance—"nothing? no news of my mother? Thirty-six hours more, then, of anxiety."

"It seems to me, that, if the princess had bad news to give, she would have written. Probably the improvement goes on."

“You are doubtless right, Rodin—but no matter—I am far from easy. If, to-morrow, the news should not be completely satisfactory, I set out for the estate of the princess. Why would my mother pass the autumn in that part of the country? The environs of Dunkirk do not, I fear, agree with her.”

After a few moments' silence, he added, as he continued to walk: “Well—these letters—where are they?”

Rodin looked at the post-marks and replied: “Out of the four, there are three relative to the great and important affair of the medals.”

“Thank heaven!—provided the news be favorable,” cried his master, with an expression of uneasiness, which showed how much importance he attached to this affair.

“One is from Charlestown, and no doubt relative to Gabriel the missionary,” answered Rodin; “this other from Batavia, and no doubt concerns the Indian, Djalma. The third is from Leipsic, and will probably confirm that received yesterday, in which the lion-tamer, Morok, informed us that, in accordance with his orders, and without his being compromised in any way, the daughters of General Simon would not be able to continue their journey.”

At the name of General Simon, a cloud passed over the features of Rodin's master.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE ORDERS.

"THE principal houses correspond with that in Paris; they are also in direct communication with the general, who resides at Rome. The correspondence of the Jesuits, so active, various, and organized in so wonderful a manner, has for its object to supply the heads with all the information they can require. Every day, the general receives a host of reports, which serve to check one another. In the central house, at Rome, are immense registers, in which are inscribed the names of all the Jesuits, of their adherents, and of all the considerable persons, whether friends or enemies, with whom they have any connection. In these registers are reported, without alteration, hatred or passion, the facts relating to the life of each individual. It is the most gigantic biographical collection that has ever been formed. The frailties of a woman, the secret errors of a statesman, are chronicled

in this book with the same cold impartiality. Drawn up for the purpose of being useful, these biographies are necessarily exact. When the Jesuits wish to influence an individual, they have but to turn to this book, and they know immediately his life, his character, his parts, his faults, his projects, his family, his friends, his most secret ties. Conceive what a superior facility of action this immense police-register, which includes the whole world, must give to any society! It is not lightly that I speak of these registers; I have my facts from a person who has *seen* this collection, and who is perfectly well acquainted with the Jesuits. Here then is matter to reflect on for all those families who admit freely into their houses the members of a community that carries its biographical researches to such a point."

(LIBRI, Member of the Institute.
Letters on the Clergy.)

WHEN he had conquered the involuntary emotion which the name or remembrance of General Simon had occasioned, Rodin's master said to the secretary: "Do not yet open the letters from Leipsic, Charlestown, and Batavia; the in-

formation they contain will doubtless find its place presently. It will save our going over the same ground twice."

The secretary looked inquiringly at his master.

The latter continued—"Have you finished the note relating to the medals?"

"Here it is," replied the secretary; "I was just finishing my interpretation of the cipher."

"Read it to me, in the order of the facts. You can append to it the news contained in those three letters."

"True," said Rodin; "in that way the letters will find their right place."

"I wish to see," rejoined the other, "whether this note is clear and fully explanatory; you did not forget that the person it is intended for ought not to know all?"

"I bore it in mind, and drew up the paper accordingly."

"Read," said the master.

M. Rodin read as follows, slowly and deliberately:

"A hundred and fifty years ago, a French Protestant family, foreseeing the speedy revocation of the Edict of Nantes, went into voluntary exile, in order to avoid the just and rigorous decrees already issued against the members of the

reformed church—those indomitable foes of our holy religion.

“ ‘ Some members of this family sought refuge in Holland, and afterward in the Dutch colonies ; others in Poland, others in Germany ; some in England, and some in America.

“ ‘ It is supposed that only seven descendants remain of this family, which underwent strange vicissitudes, since its present representatives are found in all ranks of society, from the sovereign to the mechanic.

“ ‘ These descendants, direct or indirect, are :

“ ‘ On the mother’s side—

“ ‘ Rose and Blanche Simon—minors.

“ ‘ General Simon, married, at Warsaw, a descendant of the said family.

“ ‘ Francois Hardy, manufacturer at Plessis, near Paris.

“ ‘ Prince Djalma, son of Kadja-sing, King of Mondî.

“ ‘ Kadja-sing married, in 1802, a descendant of the said family, then settled at Batavia, in the Island of Java, a Dutch colony.

“ ‘ On the father’s side—

“ ‘ Jacques Rennepont, surnamed Sleep-inbuff, mechanic.

“ ‘ Adrienne de Cardoville, daughter of

the Count of Rennepont, Duke at Cardoville.

“ ‘Gabriel Rennepont, priest of the foreign missions.

“ ‘All the members of this family possess, or should possess, a bronze medal bearing the following inscriptions :

<p>VICTIM of L. C. D. J. Pray for me !</p>	<p>AT PARIS, Rue St. François, No. 3, In a century and a half you will be. February the 13th, 1832.</p>
<p>PARIS. February the 13th, 1682.</p>	<p>PRAY FOR ME !</p>

“ ‘These words and dates show that all of them have a great interest to be at Paris on the 13th of February, 1832 ; and that, not by proxy, but in person, whether they are minors, married or single.

“ ‘But other persons have an immense interest that none of the descendants of this family be at Paris on the 13th of February, except Gabriel Rennepont, priest of the foreign missions.

“ ‘At all hazards, therefore, Gabriel *must* be *the only person* present at the appointment made with the descendants of this family, a century and a half ago.

“ ‘To prevent the other six persons from reaching Paris on the said day, or to render their presence of no effect, much has been already done ; but much remains to be done to insure the success of this

affair, which is considered as the most vital and most important of the age, on account of its probable results. ' "

" 'Tis but too true," observed Rodin's master, interrupting him, and shaking his head pensively. " And, moreover, that the consequences of success are incalculable, and there is no foreseeing what may follow failure. In a word, it almost involves a question of existence or non-existence during several years. To succeed, therefore, 'all possible means must be employed. Nothing must be shunned,' except, however, that appearances must be skillfully maintained."

" I have written it," said Rodin, having added the words his master had just dictated, who then said,

"Continue."

Rodin read on :

" 'To forward or secure the affair in question, it is necessary to give some private and secret particulars respecting the seven persons who represent this family.

" 'The truth of these particulars may be relied on. In case of need they might be completed in the most minute degree; for, contradictory information having been given, very lengthened evidence has been obtained. The order in which the

names of the persons stand will be observed, and events that have happened up to the present time will only be mentioned.

“ ‘ NOTE, No 1.

“ ‘ Rose and Blanche Simon, twin sisters, about fifteen years of age ; very pretty, so much alike, one might be taken for the other ; mild and timid disposition, but capable of enthusiasm. Brought up in Siberia by their mother, a woman of strong mind and deistical sentiments, they are wholly ignorant of our holy religion.

“ ‘ General Simon, separated from his wife before they were born, is not aware, even now, that he has two daughters.

“ ‘ It was hoped that their presence in Paris, on the 13th of February, would be prevented, by sending their mother to a place of exile much more distant than the one first allotted her ; but their mother dying, the governor of Siberia, who is wholly ours, supposing, by a deplorable mistake, that the measure only affected the wife of General Simon personally, unfortunately allowed the girls to return to France, under the guidance of an old soldier.

“ ‘ This man is enterprising, faithful, and determined. He is noted down as *dangerous*.

“‘The Simon girls are inoffensive. It is hoped, on fair grounds, that they are now detained in the neighborhood of Leipsic.’ ”

Rodin’s master interrupted him, saying :

“ Now, read the letter just received from Leipsic ; it may complete the information.”

Rodin read it and exclaimed :

“ Excellent news ! The maidens and their guide had succeeded in escaping during the night from the White Falcon tavern, but all three were overtaken and seized about a league from Mockern. They have been transferred to Leipsic, where they are imprisoned as vagabonds ; their guide, the soldier, is accused and condemned of resisting the authorities, and using violence to a magistrate.’ ”

“ It is almost certain, then, considering the tedious mode of proceeding in Germany (otherwise we would see to it), that the girls will not be able to be here on the 13th of February,” added Rodin’s master. “ Append this to the note on the back.”

The secretary obeyed, and indorsed “ An abstract of Morok’s letter.”

“ It is written,” he then added.

“ Go on,” resumed his master.

Rodin continued reading.

“ ‘ NOTE, No. II.

“ ‘ Francois Hardy, manufacturer at Plessis, near Paris, forty years old ; a steady, rich, intelligent, active, honest, well-informed man, idolized by his workmen—thanks to numberless innovations to promote their welfare. Never attending to the duties of our holy religion. Noted down as a very dangerous man ; but the hatred and envy he excites among other manufacturers, especially in M. le Baron Tripeaud, his competitor, may easily be turned against him. If other means of action on his account, and against him, are necessary, the evidence may be consulted ; it is very voluminous. This man has been marked and watched for a long time.

“ ‘ He has been so effectually misguided with respect to the medal that he is completely deceived as to the interests it represents. He is, however, constantly watched, surrounded, and governed, without suspecting it ; one of his dearest friends deceives him, and through his means we know his secret thoughts.

“ ‘ NOTE, No. III.

“ ‘ Prince Djalma ; eighteen ; energetic and generous, haughty, independent, and wild ; favorite of General Simon, who

commanded the troops of his father, Radja-sing, in the struggle maintained by the latter against the English in India. Djalma is mentioned only by way of reminder, for his mother died young, while her parents were living. They resided at Batavia. On the death of the latter, neither Djalma nor the king, his father, claimed their little property. It is, therefore, certain that they are ignorant of the grave interests connected with the possession of the medal in question, which formed part of the property of Djalma's mother.' "

Rodin's master interrupted him.

"Now read the letter from Batavia, and complete the information respecting Djalma."

Rodin read, and then observed :

"Good news again. Joshua van Dael, merchant at Batavia (he was educated in our Pondicherry establishment), learns from his correspondent at Calcutta that the old Indian king was killed in the last battle with the English. His son, Djalma, deprived of the paternal throne, is provisionally detained as a prisoner of state in an Indian fortress."

"We are at the end of October," said Rodin's master. "If Prince Djalma were to leave India now, he could scarcely

reach Paris by the month of February."

"Van Dael," continued Rodin, "regrets that he has not been able to prove his zeal in this case. Supposing Prince Djalma set at liberty, or having effected his escape, it is certain he would come to Batavia to claim his inheritance from his mother, since he has nothing else left him in the world. In that case, you may rely on Van Dael's devotedness. In return, he solicits very precise information, by the next post, respecting the fortune of M. le Baron Tripeaud, banker and manufacturer, with whom he has business transactions."

"Answer that point evasively. Van Dael as yet has only shown zeal; complete the information respecting Djalma from these new tidings."

Rodin wrote.

But in a few minutes his master said to him with a singular expression :

"Does not Van Dael mention General Simon in connection with Djalma's imprisonment and his father's death?"

"He does not allude to him," said the secretary, continuing his task.

Rodin's master was silent, and paced the room.

In a few moments Rodin said to him :
“ I have done it.”

“ Go on, then.”

“ ‘ NOTE, No. IV.

“ ‘ Jacques Rennepont, surnamed “ Sleepinbuff,” *i.e.* Lie-naked, workman in Baron Tripeaud’s factory. This artisan is drunken, idle, noisy, and prodigal ; he is not without sense, but idleness and debauch have ruined him. A clever agent, on whom we rely, has become acquainted with his mistress, Cephyse Soliveau, nicknamed the Bacchanal Queen. Through her means the agent has formed such ties with him that he may even now be considered beyond the reach of the interests that ought to insure his presence in Paris on the 13th of February.

“ ‘ NOTE, No. V.

“ ‘ Gabriel Rennepont, priest of foreign missions, distant relation of the above, but he is alike ignorant of the existence of his relative and the relationship. An orphan foundling, he was adopted by Frances Baudoin, the wife of a soldier going by the name Dagobert.

“ ‘ Should this soldier, contrary to expectation, reach Paris, his wife would be a powerful means of influencing him. She

is an excellent creature, ignorant and credulous, of exemplary piety, over whom we have long had unlimited control. She prevailed on Gabriel to take orders, notwithstanding his repugnance.

“ ‘ Gabriel is five-and-twenty ; disposition as angelic as his countenance ; rare and solid virtues : unfortunately he was brought up with his adopted brother, Agricola, Dagobert’s son. This Agricola is a poet and workman—but an excellent workman ; he is employed by M. Hardy ; has imbibed the most detestable doctrines ; fond of his mother ; honest, laborious, but without religious feeling. Marked as very dangerous. This causes his intimacy with Gabriel to be feared.

“ ‘ The latter, notwithstanding his excellent qualities, sometimes causes uneasiness. We have even delayed confiding in him fully. A false step might make him, too, one of the most dangerous. Much precaution must be used, then, especially till the 13th of February ; since, we repeat it, on him, on his presence in Paris at that time, depend immense hopes, and equally important interests.

“ ‘ Among other precautions, we have consented to his taking part in the American mission, for he unites with angelic sweetness of character a calm intrepidity

and an adventurous spirit which could only be satisfied by allowing him to engage in the perilous existence of the missionaries. Luckily, his superiors at Charlestown have received the strictest orders not to endanger, on any account, so precious a life. They are to send him to Paris, at least a month or two before February the 13th.' ”

Rodin's master again interrupted him, and said : “ Read the letter from Charlestown, and see what it tells you, in order to complete the information upon this point also.”

When he had read the letter, Rodin went on : “ Gabriel is expected every day from the Rocky Mountains, whither he had absolutely insisted on going alone upon a mission.”

“ What imprudence ! ”

“ He has no doubt escaped all danger, as he himself announces his speedy return to Charlestown. As soon as he arrives, which cannot (they write) be later than the middle of this month, he will be shipped off for France.”

“ Add this to the note which concerns him,” said Rodin's master.

“ It is written,” replied the secretary, a few moments later.

“ Proceed, then,” said his master. Rodin continued :

“ ‘NOTE, No. VI.

“ ‘ADRIENNE RENNEPONT DE CARDOVILLE.

“ ‘Distantly related (without knowing it) to Jacques Rennepont, *alias* Sleepinbuff, and Gabriel Rennepont, missionary priest. She will soon be twenty-one years of age, the most attractive person in the world—extraordinary beauty, though red-haired—a mind remarkable for its originality—immense fortune—all the animal instincts. The incredible independence of her character makes one tremble for the future fate of this young person. Happily, her appointed guardian, Baron Tripeaud (a baron of 1819 creation, formerly agent to the late Count of Rennepont, Duke of Cardoville), is quite in the interest, and almost in the dependence of the young lady’s aunt. We count, with reason, upon this worthy and respectable relative, and on the Baron Tripeaud, to oppose and repress the singular, unheard-of designs which this young person, as resolute as independent, does not fear to avow—and which, unfortunately, cannot be turned to account in the interest of the affair in question—for—’ ”

Rodin was here interrupted by two discreet taps at the door. The secretary

rose, went to see who knocked, remained a moment without, and then returned with two letters in his hand, saying: "The princess has profited by the departure of a courier to—"

"Give me the letter!" cried his master, without leaving him time to finish. "At length," he added, "I shall have news of my mother!"

He had scarcely read the first few lines of the letter when he grew deadly pale, and his features took an expression of painful astonishment and poignant grief. "My mother!" he cried, "oh, heavens! my mother!"

"What misfortune has happened?" asked Rodin, with a look of alarm, as he rose at the exclamation of his master.

"The symptoms of improvement were fallacious," replied the other, dejectedly; "she has now relapsed into a nearly hopeless state. And yet the doctor thinks my presence might save her, for she calls for me without ceasing. She wishes to see me for the last time, that she may die in peace. Oh, that wish is sacred! Not to grant it would be matricide. If I can but arrive in time! Traveling day and night, it will take nearly two days."

"Alas! what a misfortune!" said Ro-

din, wringing his hands and raising his eyes to heaven.

His master rang the bell violently, and said to the old servant that opened the door: "Just put what is indispensable into the portmanteau of my traveling carriage. Let the porter take a cab and go for post-horses instantly. Within an hour I must be on the road. Mother! mother!" cried he, as the servant departed in haste. "Not to see her again—oh, it would be frightful!" And sinking upon a chair, overwhelmed with sorrow, he covered his face with his hands.

This great grief was sincere—he loved tenderly his mother; that divine sentiment had accompanied him, unalterable and pure, through all the phases of a too often guilty life.

After a few minutes, Rodin ventured to say to his master, as he showed him the second letter: "This, also, has just been brought from M. Duplessis. It is very important—very pressing—"

"See what it is, and answer it. I have no head for business."

"The letter is confidential," said Rodin, presenting it to his master. "I dare not open it, as you may see by the mark on the cover."

At sight of this mark, the countenance

of Rodin's master assumed an indefinable expression of respect and fear. With a trembling hand he broke the seal. The note contained only the following words: "Leave all business, and, without losing a minute, set out and come. M. Duplessis will replace you. He has orders."

"Great God!" cried this man in despair. "Set out before I have seen my mother! It is frightful, impossible—it would perhaps kill her—yes, it would be matricide!"

While he uttered these words, his eyes rested on the huge globe, marked with red crosses. A sudden revolution seemed to take place within him; he appeared to repent of the violence of his regrets; his face, though still sad, became once more calm and grave. He handed the fatal letter to his secretary, and said to him, while he stifled a sigh: "To be classed under its proper number."

Rodin took the letter, wrote a number upon it, and placed it in a particular box. After a moment's silence, his master resumed: "You will take orders from M. Duplessis, and work with him. You will deliver to him the note on the affair of the medals; he knows to whom to address it. You will write to Batavia, Leipsic, and Charlestown, in the sense

agreed. Prevent, at any price, the daughters of General Simon from quitting Leipsic; hasten the arrival of Gabriel in Paris; and should Prince Djalma come to Batavia, tell M. Joshua van Dael that we count on his zeal and obedience to keep him there."

And this man, who, while his dying mother called to him in vain, could thus preserve his presence of mind, entered his own apartments while Rodin busied himself with the answers he had been ordered to write, and transcribed them in cipher.

In about three-quarters of an hour, the bells of the post-horses were heard jingling without. The old servant again entered, after discreetly knocking at the door, and said: "The carriage is ready."

Rodin nodded, and the servant withdrew. The secretary, in his turn, went to knock at the door of the inner room. His master appeared still grave and cold, but fearfully pale, and holding a letter in his hand.

"This for my mother," said he to Rodin; "you will send a courier on the instant."

"On the instant," replied the secretary.

"Let the three letters for Leipsic, Batavia, and Charlestown leave to-day by

the ordinary channel. They are of the last importance. You know it."

Those were his last words. Executing merciless orders with a merciless obedience he departed without even attempting to see his mother. His secretary accompanied him respectfully to his carriage.

"What road, sir?" asked the postilion, turning round on his saddle.

"The road to ITALY!" answered Rodin's master, with so deep a sigh that it almost resembled a sob.

.
As the horses started at full gallop, Rodin made a low bow; then he returned to the large, cold, bare apartment. The attitude, countenance, and gait of this personage seemed to have undergone a sudden change. He appeared to have increased in dimensions. He was no longer an automaton, moved by the mechanism of humble obedience. His features, till now impassible, his glance, hitherto subdued, became suddenly animated with an expression of diabolical craft; a sardonic smile curled his thin, pale lips, and a look of grim satisfaction relaxed his cadaverous face.

In turn, he stopped before the huge globe. In turn, he contemplated it in silence, even as his master had done.

Then, bending over it, and embracing it, as it were, in his arms, he gloated with his reptile eye on it for some moments, drew his coarse finger along its polished surface, and tapped his flat, dirty nail on three of the places dotted with red crosses. And, while he thus pointed to three towns, in very different parts of the world, he named them aloud, with a sneer, "Leipsic—Charlestown—Batavia."

"In each of these three places," he added, "distant as they are from one another, there exist persons who little think that here, in this obscure street, from the recesses of this chamber, wakeful eyes are upon them—that all their movements are followed, all their actions known—and that hence will issue new instructions, which deeply concern them, and which will be inexorably executed ; for an interest is at stake, which may have a powerful influence on Europe—on the world. Luckily, we have friends at Leipsic, Charlestown, and Batavia."

This funny, old, sordid, ill-dressed man, with his livid and death-like countenance, thus crawling over the sphere before him, appeared still more awful than his master, when the latter, erect and haughty, had imperiously laid his hand upon that globe, which he seemed desirous of subjecting by

the strength of his pride and courage. The one resembled the eagle, that hovers above his prey—the other the reptile, that envelops its victim in its inextricable folds.

After some minutes, Rodin approached his desk, rubbing his hands briskly together, and wrote the following epistle in a cipher unknown even to his master :

“PARIS, $\frac{1}{2}$ past 9 A.M.

“He is gone—but he hesitated !

“When he received the order, his dying mother had just summoned him to her. He might, they told him, save her by his presence, and he exclaimed : ‘Not to go to my mother would be matricide !’

“Still he is gone—but he hesitated. I keep my eye upon him continually. These lines will reach Rome at the same time as himself.

“P.S.—Tell the Cardinal-Prince that he may rely on me, but I hope for his active aid in return.”

When he had folded and sealed this letter, Rodin put it into his pocket. The clock struck ten, M. Rodin’s hour for breakfast. He arranged and locked up his papers in a drawer, of which he carried away the key, brushed his old greasy hat

with his sleeve, took a patched umbrella in his hand, and went out.*

While these two men, in the depths of their obscure retreat, were thus framing a plot, which was to involve the seven descendants of a race formerly proscribed—a strange, mysterious defender was planning how to protect this family, which was also his own.

* Having cited the excellent, courageous letters of M. Libri, and the curious work edited by M. Paulin, it is our duty likewise to mention many bold and conscientious writings on the subject of the "Society of Jesus," recently published by the Elder Dupin, Michelet, Quinet, Génin, and the Count de Saint Priest—works of high and impartial intellects, in which the fatal theories of the order are admirably exposed and condemned. We esteem ourselves happy if we can bring one stone toward the erection of the strong, and, we hope, durable embankment which these generous hearts and noble minds are raising against the encroachments of an impure, and always menacing, flood.—E. S.

INTERVAL.

THE WANDERING JEW'S SENTENCE.

THE site is wild and rugged. It is a lofty eminence covered with huge bowlders of sandstone, between which rise birch trees and oaks, their foliage already yellowed by autumn. These tall trees stand out from the background of red light, which the sun has left in the west, resembling the reflection of a great fire.

From this eminence the eye looks down into a deep valley, shady, fertile, and half-veiled in light vapor by the evening mist. The rich meadows, the tufts of bushy trees, the fields from which the ripe corn has been gathered in, all blend together in one dark, uniform tint which contrasts with the limpid azure of the heavens. Steeples of gray stone or slate lift their pointed spires, at intervals, from the midst of this valley; for many villages are spread about it, bordering a high road which leads from the north to the west.

It is the hour of repose—the hour when, for the most part, every cottage window brightens to the joyous crackling of the rustic hearth, and shines afar through shade and foliage, while clouds of smoke

issue from the chimneys, and curl up slowly toward the sky. But now, strange to say, every hearth in the country seems cold and deserted. Stranger and more fatal still, every steeple rings out a funeral knell. Whatever there is of activity, movement, or life, appears concentrated in that lugubrious and far-sounding vibration.

Lights begin to show themselves in the dark villages, but they rise not from the cheerful and pleasant rustic hearth. They are as red as the fires of the herdsmen, seen at night through the midst of the fog. And then these lights do not remain motionless. They creep slowly toward the churchyard of every village. Louder sounds the death knell, the air trembles beneath the strokes of so many bells, and, at rare intervals, the funeral chant rises faintly to the summit of the hill.

Why so many interments? What valley of desolation is this, where the peaceful songs which follow the hard labors of the day are replaced by the death-dirge?—where the repose of evening is exchanged for the repose of eternity? What is this valley of the shadow, where every village mourns for its many dead, and buries them at the same hour of the same night?

Alas! the deaths are so sudden and numerous and frightful that there is hardly time to bury the dead. During day the survivors are chained to the earth by hard but necessary toil; and only in the evening, when they return from the fields, are they able, though sinking with fatigue, to dig those other furrows, in which their brethren are to lie heaped like grains of corn.

And this valley is not the only one that has seen the desolation. During a series of fatal years, many villages, many towns, many cities, many great countries, have seen, like this valley, their hearths deserted and cold—have seen, like this valley, mourning take the place of joy, and the death knell substituted for the noise of festival—have wept in the same day for their many dead, and buried them at night by the lurid glare of torches.

For, during those fatal years, an awful wayfarer had slowly journeyed over the earth, from one pole to the other—from the depths of India and Asia to the ice of Siberia—from the ice of Siberia to the borders of the seas of France.

This traveler, mysterious as death, slow as eternity, implacable as fate, terrible as the hand of heaven, was the CHOLERA!

.

The tolling of bells and the funeral chants still rose from the depths of the valley to the summit of the hill, like the complaining of a mighty voice ; the glare of the funeral torches was still seen afar through the mist of evening ; it was the hour of twilight—that strange hour, which gives to the most solid forms a vague, indefinite, fantastic appearance—when the sound of firm and regular footsteps was heard on the stony soil of the rising ground, and, between the black trunks of the trees, a man passed slowly onward.

His figure was tall, his head was bowed upon his breast ; his countenance was noble, gentle, and sad ; his eyebrows, uniting in the midst, extended from one temple to the other, like a fatal mark on his forehead.

This man did not seem to hear the distant tolling of so many funeral bells—and yet a few days before, repose and happiness, health and joy, had reigned in those villages through which he had slowly passed, and which he now left behind him mourning and desolate. But the traveler continued on his way, absorbed in his own reflections.

“The 13th of February approaches,” thought he ; “the day approaches, in which the descendants of my beloved sis-

ter, the lost scions of our race, should meet in Paris. Alas ! it is now a hundred and fifty years since, for the third time, persecution scattered this family over all the earth—this family, that I have watched over with tenderness for eighteen centuries, through all its migrations and exiles, its changes of religion, fortune, and name !

“ Oh ! for this family, descended from the sister of the poor shoemaker,* what grandeur and what abasement, what obscurity and what splendor, what misery and what glory ! By how many crimes has it been sullied, by how many virtues honored ! The history of this single family is the history of the human race !

“ Passing, in the course of so many generations, through the veins of the poor and the rich, of the sovereign and

* It is known that, according to the legend, the Wandering Jew was a shoemaker at Jerusalem. The Saviour, carrying his cross, passed before the house of the artisan, and asked him to be allowed to rest an instant on the stone bench at his door. “ Go on ! go on ! ” said the Jew, harshly, pushing him away. “ Thou shalt go on till the end of time,” answered the Saviour, in a stern though sorrowful tone. For further details, see the eloquent and learned notice by Charles Magnin, appended to the magnificent poem of “ Ahasuerus,” by Ed. Quinet.—E. S.

the bandit, of the wise man and the fool, of the coward and the brave, of the saint and the atheist, the blood of my sister has transmitted itself to this hour.

“What scions of this family are now remaining? Seven only.

“Two orphans, the daughters of proscribed parents—a dethroned prince—a poor missionary priest—a man of the middle class—a young girl of a great name and large fortune—a mechanic.

“Together, they comprise in themselves the virtue, the courage, the degradation, the splendor, the miseries of our species!

“Siberia—India—America—France—behold the divers places where fate has thrown them!

“My instinct teaches me when one of them is in peril. Then, from the North to the South, from the East to the West, I go to seek them. Yesterday amid the Polar frosts—to-day in the temperate zone—to-morrow beneath the fires of the tropics—but often, alas! at the moment when my presence might save them, the invisible hand impels me, the whirlwind carries me away, and the voice speaks in my ear, ‘Go ON! Go ON!’

“Oh, that I might only finish my task!—‘Go ON!’—A single hour—only a single hour of repose!—‘Go ON!’—Alas! I

leave those I love on the brink of the abyss!—‘Go on! Go on!’

“Such is my punishment. If it is great, my crime was greater still! An artisan, devoted to privations and misery, my misfortunes had made me cruel.

“Oh, cursed, cursed be the day, when, as I bent over my work, sullen with hate and despair, because, in spite of my incessant labor, I and mine wanted for everything, the Saviour passed before my door.

“Reviled, insulted, covered with blows, hardly able to sustain the weight of His heavy cross, He asked me to let Him rest a moment on my stone bench. The sweat poured from His forehead, His feet were bleeding, He was well nigh sinking with fatigue, and He said to me in a mild, heart-piercing voice: ‘I suffer!’ ‘And I too suffer,’ I replied, as with harsh anger I pushed him from the place: ‘I suffer, and no one comes to help me! I find no pity, and will give none. Go on! Go on!’ Then, with a deep sigh of pain, He answered, and spake this sentence! ‘Verily, thou shalt go on till the day of thy redemption, for so wills the Father which art in heaven!’

“And so my punishment began. Too late I opened these eyes to the light,

too late I learned repentance and charity, too late I understood those divine words of Him I had outraged, words which should be the law of the whole human race—‘LOVE YE ONE ANOTHER.’

“In vain through successive ages, gathering strength and eloquence from those celestial words, have I labored to earn my pardon, by filling with commiseration and love hearts that were overflowing with envy and bitterness, by inspiring many a soul with a sacred horror of oppression and injustice. For me, the day of mercy has not yet dawned !

“And even as the first man, by his fall, devoted his posterity to misfortune, it would seem as if I, the workman, had consigned the whole race of artisans to endless sorrows, and as if they were expiating my crime : for they alone, during these eighteen centuries, have not yet been delivered.

“For eighteen centuries, the powerful and the happy of this world have said to the toiling people what I said to the imploring and suffering Saviour : ‘Go on ! Go on !’ And the people, sinking with fatigue, bearing their heavy cross, have answered in the bitterness of their grief : ‘Oh, for pity’s sake ! a few moments of repose ; we are worn out with toil.’—‘Go

on !'—' And if we perish in our pain, what will become of our little children and our aged mothers ? '—' Go on ! Go on ! ' And, for eighteen centuries, they and I have continued to struggle forward and to suffer, and no charitable voice has yet pronounced the word, ' Enough ! '

" Alas ! such is my punishment. It is immense, it is twofold. I suffer in the name of humanity when I see these wretched multitudes consigned without respite to profitless and oppressive toil. I suffer in the name of my family, when, poor and wandering, I am unable to bring aid to the descendants of my dear sister. But, when the sorrow is above my strength, when I foresee some danger from which I cannot preserve my own, then my thoughts, traveling over the world, go in search of that woman like me accursed, that daughter of a queen, who like me, the son of a laborer, wanders, and will wander on, till the day of her redemption.*

" Once in a century, as two planets

* According to a legend very little known, for which we are indebted to the kindness of M. Maury, the learned sub-librarian of the Institute, Herodias was condemned to wander till the day of judgment, for having asked for the death of St. John the Baptist.—E. S.

draw nigh to each other in their revolutions, I am permitted to meet this woman during the dread week of the Passion. And after this interview, filled with terrible remembrances and boundless griefs, wandering stars of eternity, we pursue our infinite course.

“And this woman, the only one upon earth who, like me, sees the end of every century, and exclaims: ‘What! another?’ this woman responds to my thought, from the furthest extremity of the world. She, who alone shares my terrible destiny, has chosen to share also the only interest that has consoled me for so many ages. Those descendants of my dear sister she too loves, she too protects them. For them she journeys likewise from East to West, and from North to South.

“But alas! the invisible hand impels her, the whirlwind carries her away, and the voice speaks in her ear: ‘Go on!’—‘Oh that I might finish my sentence!’ repeats she also.—‘Go on!’—‘A single hour—only a single hour of repose!’—‘Go on!’—‘I leave those I love on the brink of the abyss.’—‘Go on! Go on!’”

While this man thus went over the hill absorbed in his thoughts, the light evening breeze increased almost to a gale, a

vivid flash streamed across the sky, and long, deep whistlings announced the coming of a tempest.

On a sudden this doomed man, who could no longer weep or smile, started with a shudder. No physical pain could reach him, and yet he pressed his hand hastily to his heart, as though he had experienced a cruel pang. "Oh!" cried he; "I feel it. This hour many of those whom I love—the descendants of my dear sister—suffer, and are in great peril. Some in the center of India—some in America—some here in Germany. The struggle recommences, the detestable passions are again awake. Oh, thou that hearest me—thou, like myself, wandering and accursed—Herodias! help me to protect them! May my invocation reach thee, in those American solitudes where thou now lingerest—and may we arrive in time!"

Thereon an extraordinary event happened. Night was come. The man made a movement, precipitately, to retrace his steps—but an invisible force prevented him, and carried him forward in the opposite direction.

At this moment the storm burst forth in its murky majesty. One of those

whirlwinds which tear up trees by the roots, and shake the foundations of the rocks, rushed over the hill rapid and loud as thunder.

In the midst of the roaring of the hurricane, by the glare of the fiery flashes, the man with the black mark on his brow was seen descending the hill, stalking with huge strides among the rocks, and between trees bent beneath the efforts of the storm.

The tread of this man was no longer slow, firm and steady—but painfully irregular, like that of one impelled by an irresistible power, or carried along by the whirl of a frightful wind. In vain he extended his supplicating hands to heaven. Soon he disappeared in the shades of night, and amid the roar of the tempest.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE AJOUPA.

WHILE Rodin dispatched his cosmopolite correspondence, from his retreat in the Rue du Milieu des Ursins, in Paris—while the daughters of General Simon, after quitting as fugitives the White Falcon, were detained prisoners at Leipsic along with Dagobert—other scenes deeply interesting to these different personages were passing, almost as it were at the same moment, at the other extremity of the world, in the furthestmost parts of Asia—that is to say, in the island of Java, not far from the city of Batavia, the residence of M. Joshua van Dael, one of the correspondents of Rodin.

Java ! magnificent and fatal country, where the most admirable flowers conceal hideous reptiles, where the brightest fruits contain subtle poisons, where grow splendid trees, whose very shadow is death—where the gigantic vampire bat sucks the blood of its victims while it prolongs their sleep, by surrounding them with a fresh and balmy air, no fan moving so rapidly as the great perfumed wings of this monster !

The month of October, 1831, draws near its close. It is noon—an hour well-nigh mortal to him who encounters the fiery heat of the sun, which spreads a sheet of dazzling light over the deep blue enamel of the sky.

An ajoupa, or hut, made of cane mats, suspended from long bamboos, which are driven far into the ground, rises in the midst of the bluish shadows cast by a tuft of trees whose glittering verdure resembles green porcelain. These quaintly formed trees, rounded into arches, pointing like spires, overspreading like parasols, are so thick in foliage, so entangled one with the other, that their dome is impenetrable to the rain.

The soil, ever marshy, notwithstanding the insupportable heat, disappears beneath an inextricable mass of creepers, ferns, and tufted reeds, of a freshness and vigor of vegetation almost incredible, reaching nearly to the top of the ajoupa, which lies hid like a nest among the grass.

Nothing can be more suffocating than the atmosphere, heavily laden with moist exhalations like the steam of hot water, and impregnated with the strongest and sharpest scents; for the cinnamon tree, ginger plant, stephanotis and Cape jasmine, mixed with these trees and creepers,

spread around in puffs their penetrating odors. A roof, formed of large Indian fig-leaves, covers the cabin; at one end is a square opening, which serves for a window, shut in with a fine lattice-work of vegetable fibers, so as to prevent the reptiles and venomous insects from creeping into the ajoupa. The huge trunk of a dead tree, still standing, but much bent, and with its summit reaching to the roof of the ajoupa, rises from the midst of the brushwood. From every crevice in its black, rugged, mossy bark, springs a strange, almost fantastic flower; the wing of the butterfly is not of a finer tissue, of a more brilliant purple, of a more glossy black: those unknown birds we see in our dreams have no more grotesque forms than these specimens of the orchis—winged flowers that seem always ready to fly from their frail and leafless stalks. The long, flexible stems of the cactus, which might be taken for reptiles, encircle also this trunk and clothe it with their bunches of silvery white, shaded inside with bright orange. These flowers emit a strong scent of vanilla.

A serpent, of a brick-red, about the thickness of a large quill, and five or six inches long, half protrudes its flat head from one of those enormous, perfumed

calyces, in which it lies closely curled up.

Within the ajoupa, a young man is extended on a mat in a profound sleep. His complexion of a clear golden yellow, gives him the appearance of a statue of pale bronze, on which a ray of the sun is playing. His attitude is simple and graceful; his right arm sustains his head, a little raised and turned on one side; his ample robe of white muslin, with hanging sleeves, leaves uncovered his chest and arms worthy of the Antinous. Marble is not more firm, more polished than his skin, the golden hue of which contrasts strongly with the whiteness of his garments. Upon his broad manly chest a deep scar is visible—the mark of the musket-ball he received in defending the life of General Simon, the father of Rose and Blanche. Suspended from his neck, he wears a medal similar to that in the possession of the two sisters. This Indian in Djalma.

His features are at once very noble and very beautiful. His hair of a blue black, parted upon his forehead, falls waving, but not curled, over his shoulders; while his eyebrows, boldly and yet delicately defined, are of as deep a jet as the long eyelashes, that cast their shadow upon his beardless cheek. His bright, red lips are slightly apart, and he breathes un-

easily ; his sleep is heavy and troubled, for the heat becomes every moment more and more suffocating.

Without, the silence is profound. Not a breath of air is stirring. Yet now the tall ferns, which cover the soil, begin to move almost imperceptibly, as though their stems were shaken by the slow progress of some crawling body. From time to time, this trifling oscillation suddenly ceases, and all is again motionless. But, after several of these alternations of rustling and deep silence, a human hand appears in the midst of the jungle, a little distance from the trunk of the dead tree.

The man to whom it belonged was possessed of a grim countenance, with a complexion the color of greenish bronze, long black hair bound about his temples, eyes brilliant with savage fire, and an expression remarkable for its intelligence and ferocity. Holding his breath, he remained quite still for a moment ; then, advancing upon his hands and knees, pushing aside the leaves so gently that not the slightest noise could be heard, he arrived cautiously and slowly at the trunk of the dead tree, the summit of which nearly touched the roof of the ajoupa.

This man, of Malay origin, belonging to the sect of the Lughardars (Stran-

glers), after having again listened, rose almost entirely from among the brushwood. With the exception of white cotton drawers, fastened around his middle by a parti-colored sash, he was completely naked. His bronzed, supple, and nervous limbs were overlaid with a thick coat of oil. Stretching himself along the huge trunk on the side furthest from the cabin, and thus sheltered by the whole breadth of the tree with its surrounding creepers, he began to climb silently, with as much patience as caution. In the undulations of his form, in the flexibility of his movements, in the restrained vigor, which fully put forth would have been alarming, there was some resemblance to the stealthy and treacherous advance of the tiger upon his prey. Having reached, completely unperceived, the inclined portion of the tree, which almost touched the roof of the cabin, he was only separated from the window by the distance of about a foot. Cautiously advancing his head, he looked down into the interior, to see how he might best find an entrance.

At sight of Djalma in his deep sleep, the Thug's bright eyes glittered with increased brilliancy; a nervous contraction, or rather a mute, ferocious laugh, curling the corners of his mouth, drew them up

toward the cheek bones, and exposed rows of teeth, filed sharp like the points of a saw, and dyed of a shining black.

Djalma was lying in such a manner and so near the door of the ajoupa, which opened inward, that, were it moved in the least, he must be instantly awakened. The Strangler, with his body still sheltered by the tree, wishing to examine more attentively the interior of the cabin, leaned very forward, and in order to maintain his balance, lightly rested his hand on the ledge of the opening that served for a window. This movement shook the large cactus-flower, within which the little serpent lay curled, and, darting forth, it twisted itself rapidly round the wrist of the Strangler. Whether from pain or surprise, the man uttered a low cry; and as he drew back swiftly, still holding by the trunk of the tree, he perceived that Djalma had moved.

The young Indian, though retaining his supine posture, had half opened his eyes, and turned his head toward the window, while his breast heaved with a deep-drawn sigh, for, beneath that thick dome of moist verdure, the concentrated heat was intolerable.

Hardly had he moved, when, from behind the tree, was heard the shrill, brief,

sonorous note which the bird of paradise utters when it takes its flight—a cry which resembles that of the pheasant. This note was soon repeated, but more faintly, as though the brilliant bird were already at a distance. Djalma, thinking he had discovered the cause of the noise which had aroused him for an instant, stretched out the arm upon which his head had rested, and went to sleep again, with scarcely any change of position.

For some minutes, the most profound silence once more reigned in this solitude, and everything remained motionless.

The Strangler, by his skillful imitation of the bird, had repaired the imprudence of that exclamation of surprise and pain, which the reptile's bite had forced from him. When he thought all was safe, he again advanced his head, and saw the young Indian once more plunged in sleep. Then he descended the tree with the same precautions, though his left hand was somewhat swollen from the sting of the serpent, and disappeared in the jungle.

At that instant a song of monotonous and melancholy cadence was heard in the distance. The Strangler raised himself, and listened attentively, and his face took an expression of surprise and deadly anger. The song came nearer and nearer

to the cabin, and in a few seconds, an Indian, passing through an open space in the jungle, approached the spot where the Thug lay concealed.

The latter unwound from his waist a long thin cord, to one of the ends of which was attached a leaden ball, of the form and size of an egg; having fastened the other end of this cord to his right wrist, the Strangler again listened, and then disappeared, crawling through the tall grass in the direction of the Indian, who still advanced slowly, without interrupting his soft and plaintive song.

He was a young fellow scarcely twenty, with a bronzed complexion, the slave of Djalma; his vest of blue cotton was confined at the waist by a parti-colored sash; he wore a red turban, and silver rings in his ears and about his wrists. He was bringing a message to his master, who, during the great heat of the day, was reposing in the ajoupa, which stood at some distance from the house he inhabited.

Arriving at a place where two paths separate, the slave without hesitation took that which led to the cabin, from which he was now scarce forty paces distant.

One of those enormous Java butterflies, whose wings extend six or eight inches in

length, and offer to the eye two streaks of gold on a ground of ultramarine, fluttering from leaf to leaf, alighted on a bush of Cape jasmine, within the reach of the young Indian. The slave stopped in his song, stood still, advanced first a foot, then a hand, and seized the butterfly.

Suddenly, he sees a dark figure rise before him; he hears a whizzing noise like that of a sling; he feels a cord, thrown with as much rapidity as force, encircle his neck with a triple band; and, almost in the same instant, the leaden ball strikes violently against the back of his head.

This attack was so abrupt and unforeseen that Djalma's servant could not even utter a single cry, a single groan. He tottered—the Strangler gave a vigorous pull at the cord—the bronzed countenance of the slave became purple, and he fell upon his knees, convulsively moving his arms. Then the Strangler threw him quite down, and pulled the cord so violently that the blood spurted from the skin. The victim struggled for a moment—and all was over.

During his short but intense agony, the murderer, kneeling before his victim, and watching with ardent eye his least convulsions, seemed plunged in an ecstasy

of ferocious joy. His nostrils dilated, the veins of his neck and temples were swollen, and the same savage laugh, which had curled his lips at the aspect of the sleeping Djalma, again displayed his pointed black teeth, which a nervous trembling of the jaws made to chatter. But soon he crossed his arms upon his heaving breast, bowed his forehead, and murmured some mysterious words, which sounded like an invocation or a prayer. Immediately after, he returned to the contemplation of the dead body. The hyena and the tiger-cat, who, before devouring, crouch beside the prey that they have surprised or hunted down, have not a wilder or more sanguinary look than this man.

But, remembering that his task was not yet accomplished, tearing himself unwillingly from the hideous spectacle, he unbound the cord from the neck of his victim, fastened it round his own body, dragged the corpse out of the path, and, without attempting to rob it of its silver rings, concealed it in a thick part of the jungle.

Then the Strangler again began to creep on his knees and belly till he arrived at the cabin of Djalma — that cabin constructed of mats suspended from bam-

boos. After listening attentively, he drew from his girdle a knife, the sharp-pointed blade of which was wrapped in a fig-leaf, and made in the matting an incision of three feet in length. This was done with such quickness, and with so fine a blade, that the light touch of the diamond cutting glass would have made more noise. Seeing, by means of this opening, which was to serve him for a passage, that Djalma was still fast asleep, the Thug, with incredible temerity, glided into the cabin.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE TATTOOING.

THE heavens, which had been till now of transparent blue, became gradually of a greenish tint, and the sun was veiled in red, lurid vapor. This strange light gave to every object a weird appearance, of which one might form an idea by looking at a landscape through a piece of copper-colored glass. In those climates, this phenomenon, when united with an increase of burning heat, always announces the approach of a storm.

From time to time there was a passing odor of sulphur; then the leaves, slightly shaken by electric currents, would tremble

upon their stalks ; till again all would return to the former motionless silence. The weight of the burning atmosphere, saturated with sharp perfumes, became almost intolerable. Large drops of sweat stood in pearls on the forehead of Djalma, still plunged in enervating sleep—for it no longer resembled rest, but a painful stupor.

The Strangler glided like a reptile along the sides of the ajoupa, and, crawling on his belly, arrived at the sleeping-mat of Djalma, beside which he squatted himself, so as to occupy as little space as possible. Then began a fearful scene, by reason of the mystery and silence which surrounded it.

Djalma's life was at the mercy of the Strangler. The latter, resting upon his hands and knees, with his neck stretched forward, his eye fixed and dilated, continued motionless as a wild beast about to spring. Only a slight, nervous trembling of the jaws agitated that mask of bronze.

But soon his hideous features revealed a violent struggle that was passing within him—a struggle between the thirst, the craving for the enjoyment of murder, which the recent assassination of the slave had made still more active, and the orders he had received not to attempt the life of

Djalma, though the design, which brought him to the ajoupa, might perhaps be as fatal to the young Indian as death itself. Twice did the Strangler, with look of flame, resting only on his left hand, seize with his right the rope's end ; and twice his hand fell—the instinct of murder yielding to a powerful will, of which the Malay acknowledged the irresistible empire.

In him, the homicidal craving must have amounted to madness, for, in these hesitations, he lost much precious time : at any moment, Djalma, whose vigor, skill, and courage were known and feared, might awake from his sleep, and, though unarmed, he would prove a terrible adversary. At length the Thug made up his mind ; with a suppressed sigh of regret he set about accomplishing his task.

This task would have appeared impossible to any one else. The reader may judge.

Djalma, with his face turned toward the left, leaned his head upon his curved arm. It was first necessary, without waking him, to oblige him to turn his face toward the right (that is, toward the door), so that, in case of his being half-roused, his first glance might not fall upon the Strangler. The latter, to accomplish his projects, would have to remain many minutes in the cabin.

The heavens became darker ; the heat arrived at its last degree of intensity ; everything combined to increase the torpor of the sleeper and so favor the Strangler's designs. Kneeling down close to Djalma, he began, with the tips of his supple, well-oiled fingers, to stroke the brow, temples, and eyelids of the young Indian, but with such extreme lightness that the contact of the two skins was hardly sensible. When this kind of magnetic incantation had lasted for some seconds, the sweat, which bathed the forehead of Djalma, became more abundant : he heaved a smothered sigh, and the muscles of his face gave several twitches, for the strokings, although too light to rouse him, yet caused in him a feeling of indefinable uneasiness.

Watching him with his restless and burning eye, the Strangler continued his maneuvers with so much patience that Djalma, still sleeping, but no longer able to bear this vague, annoying sensation, raised his right hand mechanically to his face, as if he would have brushed away an importunate insect. But he had not strength to do it ; almost immediately after his hand, inert and heavy, fell back upon his chest. The Strangler saw, by this symptom, that he was attaining his

object, and continued to stroke, with the same address, the eyelids, brow, and temples.

Whereupon Djalma, more and more oppressed by heavy sleep, and having neither strength nor will to raise his hand to his face, mechanically turned round his head, which fell languidly upon his right shoulder, seeking, by this change of attitude, to escape from the disagreeable sensation which pursued him. The first point gained, the Strangler could act more freely.

To render as profound as possible the sleep he had half interrupted, he now strove to imitate the vampire, and, feigning the action of a fan, he rapidly moved his extended hands about the burning face of the young Indian. Alive to a feeling of such sudden and delicious coolness, in the height of suffocating heat, the countenance of Djalma brightened, his bosom heaved, his half-opened lips drank in the grateful air, and he fell into a sleep only the more profound because it had been at first disturbed, and was now yielded to under the influence of a pleasing sensation.

A sudden flash of lightning illumined the shady dome that sheltered the ajoupa : fearing that the first clap of thunder might

rouse the young Indian, the Strangler hastened to complete his task. Djalma lay on his back, with his head resting on his right shoulder and his left arm extended; the Thug, crouching at his left side, ceased by degrees the process of fanning; then, with incredible dexterity, he succeeded in rolling up, above the elbow, the long wide sleeve of white muslin that covered the left arm of the sleeper.

He next drew from the pocket of his drawers a copper box, from which he took a very fine, sharp-pointed needle and a piece of black-looking root. He pricked this root several times with the needle, and on each occasion there issued from it a white glutinous liquid.

When the Strangler thought the needle sufficiently impregnated with this juice, he bent down, and began to blow over the inner surface of Djalma's arm, so as to cause a fresh sensation of coolness; then, with the point of his needle, he traced almost imperceptibly on the skin of the sleeping youth some mysterious and symbolical signs. All this was performed so cleverly, and the point of the needle was so fine and keen, that Djalma did not feel the action of the acid upon his skin.

The signs, which the Strangler had traced, soon appeared on the surface, at

first in characters of a pale rose-color, as fine as a hair ; but such was the slowly corrosive power of the juice, that, as it worked and spread beneath the skin, they would become in a few hours of a violet red, and as apparent as they were now almost invisible.

The Strangler, having so perfectly succeeded in his project, threw a last look of ferocious longing on the slumbering Indian, and creeping away from the mat, regained the opening by which he had entered the cabin ; next, closely uniting the edges of the incision so as to obviate all suspicion, he disappeared just as the thunder began to rumble hoarsely in the distance.*

* We read in the letters of the late Victor Jacquemont upon India, with regard to the incredible dexterity of these men : "They crawl on the ground, ditches, in the furrows of fields, imitate a hundred different voices, and dissipate the effect of any accidental noise by raising the yelp of the jackal or note of some bird—then are silent, and another imitates the call of the same animal in the distance. They can molest a sleeper by all sorts of noises and slight touches, and make his body and limbs take any position which suits their purpose." Count Edward de Warren, in his excellent work on English India, which we shall have again occasion to quote, expresses himself in the same manner as to the inconceivable address of the Indians : "They have the art," says he, "to rob you, without in-

interrupting your sleep, of the very sheet in which you are enveloped. This is not 'a traveler's tale,' but a fact. The movements of the *bheel* are those of a serpent. If you sleep in your tent, with a servant lying across each entrance, the *bheel* will come and crouch on the outside, in some shady corner, where he can hear the breathing of those within. As soon as the European sleeps, he feels sure of success, for the Asiatic will not long resist the attraction of repose. At the proper moment, he makes a vertical incision in the cloth of the tent, on the spot where he happens to be, and just large enough to admit him. He glides through like a phantom, without making the least grain of sand creak beneath his tread. He is perfectly naked, and all his body is rubbed over with oil; a two-edged knife is suspended from his neck. He will squat down close to your couch, and, with incredible coolness and dexterity, will gather up the sheet in very little folds, so as to occupy the least surface possible; then, passing to the other side, he will lightly tickle the sleeper, whom he seems to magnetize, till the latter shrinks back involuntarily, and ends by turning round, and leaving the sheet folded behind him. Should he awake and strive to seize the robber, he catches at a slippery form, which slides through his hands like an eel; should he even succeed in seizing him, it would be fatal—the dagger strikes him to the heart, he falls bathed in his blood, and the assassin disappears."

—E. S.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE SMUGGLER.

THE tempest of the morning has long been over. The sun is verging toward the horizon. Some hours have elapsed since the Strangler introduced himself into Djalma's cabin, and tattooed him with a mysterious sign during his sleep.

A horseman advances rapidly down a long avenue of spreading trees. Sheltered by the thick and verdant arch, a thousand birds salute the splendid evening with songs and circlings; red and green parrots climb, by help of their hooked beaks, to the top of pink-blossomed acacias; large Morea birds of the finest and richest blue, whose throats and long tails change in the light to a golden brown, are chasing the *prince-oriels*, clothed in their glossy feathers of black and orange; Kolo doves, of a changeable violet blue, are gently cooing by the side of the birds of paradise, in whose brilliant plumage are mingled the prismatic colors of the emerald and ruby, the topaz and sapphire.

This avenue, a little raised, commanded the view of a small pond, which reflected

at intervals the green shade of tamarind trees. In the calm, limpid waters, many fish were visible, some with silver scales and purple fins, others gleaming with azure and vermillion: so still were they that they looked as if set in a mass of bluish crystal, and, as they dwelt motionless near the surface of the pool, on which played a dazzling ray of the sun, they reveled in the enjoyment of the light and heat. A thousand insects—living gems, with wings of flame—glided, fluttered and buzzed over the transparent wave, in which, at an extraordinary depth, were mirrored the variegated tints of the aquatic plants on the bank.

It is impossible to give an adequate idea of the exuberant nature of this scene, luxuriant in sunlight, colors, and perfumes, which served, so to speak, as a frame to the young and brilliant rider, who was advancing along the avenue. It was Djalma. He had not perceived the indelible marks which the Strangler had traced upon his left arm.

His Japanese mare, of slender make, full of fire and vigor, is black as night. A narrow red cloth serves instead of saddle. To moderate the impetuous bounds of the animal, Djalma uses a small

steel bit, with headstall and reins of twisted scarlet silk, fine as a thread.

Not one of those admirable riders, sculptured so masterly on the frieze of the Parthenon, sits his horse more gracefully and proudly than this young Indian, whose fine face, illumined by the setting sun, is radiant with serene happiness; his eyes sparkle with joy, and his dilated nostrils and unclosed lips inhale with delight the balmy breeze that brings to him the perfume of flowers and the scent of fresh leaves, for the trees are still moist from the abundant rain that fell after the storm.

A red cap, similar to that worn by the Greeks, surmounting the black locks of Djalma, set off to advantage the golden tint of his complexion; his throat is bare; he is clad in his robe of white muslin with large sleeves, confined at the waist by a scarlet sash; very full drawers, in white cotton stuff, leave half uncovered his tawny and polished legs; their classic curve stands out from the dark sides of the horse, which he presses tightly between his muscular calves. He has no stirrups; his foot, small and narrow, is shod with a sandal of morocco leather.

The rush of his thoughts, by turns impetuous and restrained, was expressed in

some degree by the pace he imparted to his horse—now bold and precipitate, like the flight of unbridled imagination—now calm and measured, like the reflection which succeeds an idle dream. But, in all this fantastic course, his least movements were distinguished by a proud, independent, and somewhat savage grace.

Dispossessed of his paternal territory by the English, and at first detained by them as a state-prisoner, after the death of his father—who (as M. Joshua van Dael had written to M. Rodin) had fallen sword in hand—Djalma had at length been restored to liberty. Abandoning the continent of India, and still accompanied by General Simon, who had lingered hard by the prison of his old friend's son, the young Indian came next to Batavia, the birthplace of his mother, to collect the modest inheritance of his maternal ancestors. And among this property, so long despised or forgotten by his father, he found some important papers, and a medal exactly similar to that worn by Rose and Blanche.

General Simon was not more surprised than pleased at this discovery, which not only established a tie of kindred between his wife and Djalma's mother, but which also seemed to promise great advantages

for the future. Leaving Djalma at Batavia, to terminate some business there, he had gone to the neighboring island of Sumatra, in the hope of finding a vessel that would make the passage to Europe directly and rapidly; for it was now necessary that, cost what it might, the young Indian also should be at Paris on the 13th of February, 1832. Should General Simon find a vessel ready to sail for Europe, he was to return immediately to fetch Djalma: and the latter, expecting him daily, was now going to the pier of Batavia, hoping to see the father of Rose and Blanche arrive by the mail-boat from Sumatra.

A few words are here necessary on the early life of the son of Kadja-sing.

Having lost his mother very young, and brought up with rude simplicity, he had accompanied his father, while yet a child, to the great tiger hunts, as dangerous as battles; and, in the first dawn of youth, he had followed him to the stern and bloody war which he waged in defense of his country. Thus living, from the time of his mother's death, in the midst of forests and mountains and continual combats, his vigorous and ingenuous nature had preserved itself pure, and he well merited the name of "The Generous"

bestowed on him. Born a prince, he was—which by no means follows—a prince indeed. During the period of his captivity, the silent dignity of his bearing had overawed his jailers. Never a reproach, never a complaint—a proud and melancholy calm was all that he opposed to a treatment as unjust as it was barbarous, until he was restored to freedom.

Having thus been always accustomed to a patriarchal life, or to a war of mountaineers, which he had only quitted to pass a few months in prison, Djalma knew nothing, so to speak, of civilized society. Without its exactly amounting to a defect, he certainly carried his good qualities to their extreme limits. Obstinate-ly faithful to his pledged word, devoted to the death, confiding to blindness, good almost to a complete forgetfulness of himself, he was inflexible toward ingratitude, falsehood, or perfidy. He would have felt no compunction to sacrifice a traitor, because, could he himself have committed a treason, he would have thought it only just to expiate it with his life.

He was, in a word, the man of natural feelings, absolute and entire. Such a man, brought into contact with the temperaments, calculations, falsehoods, de-

ceptions, tricks, restrictions, and hollowness of a refined society, such as Paris, for example, would without doubt form a very curious subject for speculation. We raise the hypothesis, because, since his journey to France had been determined on, Djalma had one fixed, ardent desire—to be in Paris.

In Paris—that enchanted city—of which, even in Asia, the land of enchantment, so many marvelous tales were told.

What chiefly inflamed the fresh, vivid imagination of the young Indian was the thought of French women—those attractive Parisian beauties, miracles of elegance and grace, who eclipse, he was informed, even the magnificence of the capitals of the civilized world. And at this very moment, in the brightness of that warm and splendid evening, surrounded by the intoxication of flowers and perfumes, which accelerated the pulses of his young fiery heart, Djalma was dreaming of those exquisite creatures, whom his fancy loved to clothe in the most ideal garbs.

It seemed to him as if, at the end of the avenue, in the midst of that sheet of golden light, which the trees encompassed with their full, green arch, he could see pass and repass, white and sylph-like, a host of adorable and voluptuous phan-

toms, that threw him kisses from the tips of their rosy fingers. Unable to restrain his burning emotions, carried away by a strange enthusiasm, Djalma uttered exclamations of joy, deep, manly, and sonorous, and made his vigorous courser bound under him in the excitement of a mad delight. Just then a sunbeam, piercing the dark vault of the avenue, shone full upon him.

For several minutes, a man had been advancing rapidly along a path, which, at its termination, intersected the avenue diagonally. He stopped a moment in the shade, looking at Djalma with astonishment. It was indeed a charming sight to behold, in the midst of a blaze of dazzling luster, this youth, so handsome, joyous, and ardent, clad in his white and flowing vestments, gayly and lightly seated on his proud black mare, who covered her red bridle with her foam, and whose long tail and thick mane floated on the evening breeze.

But, with that reaction which takes place in all human desires, Djalma soon felt stealing over him a sentiment of soft, undefinable melancholy. He raised his hand to his eyes, now dimmed with moisture, and allowed the reins to fall on the mane of his docile steed, which, instantly

stopping, stretched out its long neck, and turned its head in the direction of the personage whom it could see approaching through the coppice.

This man, Mahal the Smuggler, was dressed nearly like European sailors. He wore a jacket and trousers of white duck, a broad red sash, and a very low-crowned straw hat. His face was brown, with strongly marked features, and, though forty years of age, he was quite beardless.

In another moment Mahal was close to the young Indian. "You are Prince Djalma?" said he, in not very good French, raising his hand respectfully to his hat.

"What would you?" said the Indian.

"You are the son of Kadja-sing?"

"Once again, what would you?"

"The friend of General Simon?"

"General Simon?" cried Djalma.

"You are going to meet him, as you have gone every evening, since you expect his return from Sumatra?"

"Yes, but how do you know all this?" said the Indian, looking at the Smuggler with as much surprise as curiosity.

"Is he not going to land at Batavia, to-day or to-morrow?"

"Are you sent by him?"

"Perhaps," said Mahal, with a dis-

trustful air. "But are you really the son of Kadja-sing?"

"Yes, I tell you—but where have you seen General Simon?"

"If you are the son of Kadja-sing," resumed Mahal, continuing to regard Djalma with a suspicious eye, "what is your surname?"

"My sire was called the 'Father of the Generous,' answered the young Indian, as a shade of sorrow passed over his fine countenance.

These words appeared in part to convince Mahal of the identity of Djalma; but, wishing doubtless to be still more certain, he resumed: "You must have received, two days ago, a letter from General Simon, written from Sumatra?"

"Yes; but why so many questions?"

"To assure myself that you are really the son of Kadja-sing, and to execute the orders I have received."

"From whom?"

"From General Simon."

"But where is he?"

"When I have proof that you are Prince Djalma, I will tell you. I was informed that you would be mounted on a black mare, with a red bridle. But—"

"By the soul of my mother! speak what you have to say!"

“I will tell you all—if you can tell me what was the printed paper contained in the last letter that General Simon wrote you from Sumatra.”

“It was a cutting from a French newspaper.”

“Did it announce good or bad news for the general?”

“Good news—for it related that, during his absence, they had acknowledged the last rank and title bestowed on him by the Emperor, as they had done for others of his brothers in arms, exiled like him.”

“You are, indeed, Prince Djalma,” said the Smuggler, after a moment’s reflection. ‘I may speak. General Simon landed last night in Java, but on a desert part of the coast.’”

“On a desert part?”

“Because he has to hide himself.”

“Hide himself!” exclaimed Djalma, in amazement; “why?”

“That I don’t know.”

“But where is he?” asked Djalma, growing pale with alarm.

“He is three leagues hence—near the sea-shore—in the ruins of Tchandi.”

“Obliged to hide himself!” repeated Djalma, and his countenance expressed increasing surprise and anxiety.

“Without being certain, I think it is because of a duel he fought in Sumatra,” said the Smuggler, mysteriously.

“A duel—with whom?”

“I don’t know—I am not at all certain on the subject. But do you know the ruins of Tchandi?”

“Yes.”

“The general expects you there; that is what he ordered me to tell you.”

“So you came with him from Sumatra?”

“I was pilot of the little smuggling coaster that landed him in the night on a lonely beach. He knew that you went every day to the mole to wait for him; I was almost sure that I should meet you. He gave me details about the letter you received from him as a proof that he had sent me. If he could have found the means of writing, he would have written.”

“But did he not tell you *why* he was obliged to hide himself?”

“He told me nothing. Certain words made me suspect what I told you—a duel.”

Knowing the mettle of General Simon, Djalma thought the suspicions of the Smuggler not unfounded. After a moment’s silence, he said to him: “Can you undertake to lead home my horse? My

dwelling is without the town—there, in in the midst of those trees—by the side of the new mosque. In ascending the mountain of Tchandi, my horse would be in my way; I shall go much faster on foot.”

“I know where you live; General Simon told me. I should have gone there if I had not met you. Give me your horse.”

Djalma sprung lightly to the ground, threw the bridle to Mahal, unrolled one end of his sash, took out a silk purse, and gave it to the Smuggler, saying: “You have been faithful and obedient. Here!—it is a trifle—but I have no more.”

“Kadja-sing was rightly called the ‘Father of the Generous,’ ” said the Smuggler, bowing with respect and gratitude. He took the road to Batavia, leading Djalma’s horse. The young Indian, on the contrary, plunged into the coppice, and, walking with great strides, he directed his course toward the mountain, on which were the ruins of Tchandi, where he could not arrive before night.

CHAPTER XX.

M. JOSHUA VAN DAEL.

M. JOSHUA VAN DAEL, a Dutch merchant, and correspondent of M. Rodin, was born at Batavia, the capital of the island of Java; his parents had sent him to be educated at Pondicherry, in a celebrated religious house, long established in that place, and belonging to the "Society of Jesus." It was there that he was initiated into the order, as "professor of the three vows," or lay member, commonly called "temporal coadjutor."

Joshua was a man of a probity that passed for stainless; of strict accuracy in business, cold, careful, reserved, and remarkably skillful and sagacious; his financial operations were almost always successful, for a protecting power gave him ever in time knowledge of events which might advantageously influence his commercial transactions. The religious house of Pondicherry was interested in his affairs, having charged him with the exportation and exchange of the produce of its large possessions in this colony.

Speaking little, hearing much, never disputing, polite in the extreme—giving

seldom, but with choice and purpose—Joshua, without inspiring sympathy, commanded generally that cold respect which is always paid to the rigid moralist ; for, instead of yielding to the influence of lax and dissolute colonial manners, he appeared to live with great regularity, and his exterior had something of austerity about it, which tended to overawe.

The following scene took place at Batavia, while Djalma was on his way to the ruins of Tchandi in the hope of meeting General Simon.

M. Joshua had just retired into his cabinet, in which were many shelves filled with paper boxes, and huge ledgers and cash-boxes lying open upon desks. The only window of this apartment, which was on the ground-floor, looked out upon a narrow empty court, and was protected externally by strong iron bars ; instead of glass, it was fitted with a Venetian blind, because of the extreme heat of the climate.

M. Joshua, having placed upon his desk a taper in a glass globe, looked at the clock. “Half-past nine,” said he. “Mahal ought soon to be here.”

Saying this, he went out, passed through an ante-chamber, opened a second thick door, studded with nail-heads, in the Dutch fashion, cautiously entered the

court (so as not to be heard by the people in the house), and drew back the secret bolt of a gate six feet high, formidably garnished with iron spikes. Leaving this gate unfastened, he regained his cabinet, after he had successively and carefully closed the two other doors behind him.

M. Joshua next seated himself at his desk, and took from a drawer a long letter, or rather statement, commenced sometime before, and continued day by day. It is superfluous to observe that the letter already mentioned, as addressed to M. Rodin, was anterior to the liberation of Djalma and his arrival at Batavia.

The present statement was also addressed to M. Rodin, and Van Dael thus went on with it :

“ Fearing the return of General Simon, of which I have been informed by intercepting his letters—I have already told you that I had succeeded in being employed by him as his agent here ; having then read his letters, and sent them on as if untouched to Djalma, I felt myself obliged, from the pressure of the circumstances, to have recourse to extreme measures — taking care always to preserve appearances and rendering at the same time a signal service to humanity, which last reason chiefly decided me.

“A new danger imperiously commanded these measures. The steamship *Ruyter* came in yesterday, and sails tomorrow in the course of the day. She is to make the voyage to Europe *via* the Arabian Gulf: her passengers will disembark at Suez, cross the Isthmus, and go on board another vessel at Alexandria, which will bring them to France. This voyage, as rapid as it is direct, will not take more than seven or eight weeks. We are now at the end of October; Prince Djalma might then be in France by the commencement of the month of January; and according to your instructions, of which I know not the motive, but which I execute with zeal and submission, his departure must be prevented at all hazards, because, you tell me, some of the gravest interests of the Society would be compromised by the arrival of this young Indian in Paris before the 13th of February. Now, if I succeed, as I hope, in making him miss this opportunity of the *Ruyter* it will be materially impossible for him to arrive in France before the month of April; for the *Ruyter* is the only vessel which makes the direct passage, the others taking at least four or five months to reach Europe.

“Before telling you the means which I

have thought right to employ to detain Prince Djalma—of the success of which means I am yet uncertain—it is well that you should be acquainted with the following facts.

“They have just discovered, in British India, a community whose members call themselves ‘Brothers of the Good Work,’ or ‘Phansegara,’ which signifies simply ‘Thugs’ or ‘Stranglers’; these murderers do not shed blood, but strangle their victims, less for the purpose of robbing them than in obedience to a homicidal vocation, and to the laws of an infernal divinity named by them ‘Bowanee.’

“I cannot better give you an idea of this horrible sect than by transcribing here some lines from the introduction of a report by Colonel Sleeman, who has hunted out this dark association with indefatigable zeal. The report in question was published about two months ago. Here is the extract; it is the colonel who speaks:

“‘From 1822 to 1824, when I was charged with the magistracy and civil administration of the district of Nersingpore, not a murder, not the least robbery was committed by an ordinary criminal, without my being immediately informed of it; but if any one had come and told

me at this period that a band of hereditary assassins by profession lived in the village of Kundelie, within about four hundred yards of my court of justice—that the beautiful groves of the village of Mundesoor, within a day's march of my residence, formed one of the most frightful marts of assassination in all India—that numerous bands of “Brothers of the Good Work,” coming from Hindostan and the Deccan, met annually beneath these shades, as at a solemn festival, to exercise their dreadful vocation upon all the roads which cross each other in this locality—I should have taken such a person for a madman, or one who had been imposed upon by idle tales. And yet nothing could be truer: hundreds of travelers had been buried every year in the groves of Mundesoor; a whole tribe of assassins lived close to my door, at the very time I was supreme magistrate of the province, and extended their devastations to the cities of Poonah and Hyderabad. I shall never forget, when, to convince me of the fact, one of the chiefs of the Stranglers, who had turned informer against them, caused thirteen bodies to be dug up from the ground beneath my tent, and offered to produce any number from the soil in the immediate vicinity.’ *

“These few words of Colonel Sleeman will give some idea of this dread society, which has its laws, duties, customs, opposed to all other laws human and divine. Devoted to each other, even to heroism, blindly obedient to their chiefs, who profess themselves the immediate representatives of their dark divinity, regarding as enemies all who do not belong to them, gaining recruits everywhere by a frightful system of proselytism—these apostles of a religion of murder go preaching their abominable doctrines in the shade, and spreading their immense net over the whole of India.

“Three of their principal chiefs, and one of their adepts, flying from the determined pursuit of the English governor-general, having succeeded in making their escape, had arrived at the Straits of Malacca, at no great distance from our island; a smuggler, who is also something of a pirate, attached to their association, and by name Mahal, took them on board his coasting vessel, and brought them hither, where they think themselves for some time in safety—as, following the advice of the smuggler, they lie concealed in a thick forest, in which are many ruined temples, and numerous subterranean retreats.

“Among these chiefs, all three remarkably intelligent, there is one in particular, named Faringhea, whose extraordinary energy and eminent qualities make him every way redoubtable. He is of the mixed race, half-white and Hindoo, has long inhabited towns in which are European factories, and speaks English and French very well. The other two chiefs are a Negro and a Hindoo; the adept is a Malay.

“The smuggler, Mahal, considering that he could obtain a large reward by giving up these three chiefs and their adept, came to me, knowing, as all the world knows, my intimate relations with a person who has great influence with our governor. Two days ago, he offered me, on certain conditions, to deliver up the Negro, the half-caste, the Hindoo, and the Malay. These conditions are—a considerable sum of money, and a free passage on board a vessel sailing for Europe or America, in order to escape the implacable vengeance of the Thugs.

“I joyfully seized the occasion to hand over three such murderers to human justice, and I promised Mahal to arrange matters for him with the governor, but also on certain conditions, innocent in themselves, and which concerned Djalma.

Should my project succeed, I will explain myself more at length ; I shall soon know the result, for I expect Mahal every minute.

“ But before I close these dispatches, which are to go to-morrow by the *Ruyter*—in which vessel I have also engaged a passage for Mahal the Smuggler, in the event of the success of my plans—I must include in parentheses a subject of some importance.

“ In my last letter, in which I announced to you the death of Djalma’s father, and his own imprisonment by the English, I asked for some information as to the solvency of Baron Tripeaud, banker and manufacturer at Paris, who has also an agency at Calcutta. This information will now be useless, if what I have just learned should, unfortunately, turn out to be correct, and it will be for you to act according to circumstances.

“ His house at Calcutta owes considerable sums both to me and our colleague at Pondicherry, and it is said that M. Tripeaud has involved himself to a dangerous extent in attempting to ruin, by opposition, a very flourishing establishment, founded some time ago by M. Francois Hardy, an eminent manufacturer. I am assured that M. Tripeaud

has already sunk and lost a large capital in this enterprise : he has no doubt done a great deal of harm to M. Francois Hardy ; but he has also, they say, seriously compromised his own fortune—and, were he to fail, the effects of his disaster would be very fatal to us, seeing that he owes a large sum of money to me and to us.

“ In this state of things it would be very desirable if, by the employment of the powerful means of every kind at our disposal, we could completely discredit and break down the house of M. Francois Hardy, already shaken by M. Tripeaud’s violent opposition. In that case, the latter would soon regain all he has lost ; the ruin of his rival would insure his prosperity, and our demands would be securely covered.

“ Doubtless, it is painful, it is sad, to be obliged to have recourse to these extreme measures, only to get back our own ; but, in these days, are we not surely justified in sometimes using the arms that are incessantly turned against us ? If we are reduced to such steps by the injustice and wickedness of men, we may console ourselves with the reflection that we only seek to preserve our worldly possessions in order to devote them to the greater

glory of God ; while, in the hands of our enemies, those very goods are the dangerous instruments of perdition and scandal.

“ After all, it is merely a humble proposition that I submit to you. Were it in my power to take an active part in the matter, I should do nothing of myself. My will is not my own. It belongs, with all I possess, to those to whom I have sworn absolute obedience.”

Here a slight noise interrupted M. Joshua, and drew his attention from his work. He rose abruptly and went straight to the window. Three gentle taps were given on the outside of one of the slats of the blind.

“ Is it you, Mahal ? ” asked M. Joshua, in a low voice.

“ It is I,” was answered from without, also in a low tone.

“ And the Malay ? ”

“ He has succeeded.”

“ Really ! ” cried M. Joshua, with an expression of great satisfaction ; “ are you sure of it ? ”

“ Quite sure : there is no devil more clever and intrepid.”

“ And Djalma ? ”

“ The parts of the letter which I quoted convinced him that I came from General

Simon, and that he would find him at the ruins of Tchandi."

"Therefore, at this moment—"

"Djalma goes to the ruins, where he will encounter the black, the half-blood, and the Indian. It is there they have appointed to meet the Malay, who tattooed the prince during his sleep."

"Have you been to examine the subterraneous passage?"

"I went there yesterday. One of the stones of the pedestal of the statue turns upon itself; the stairs are large; it will do."

"And the three chiefs have no suspicion?"

"None—I saw them in the morning—and this evening the Malay came to tell me all, before he went to join them at the ruins of Tchandi—for he had remained hidden among the bushes, not daring to go there in the day time."

"Mahal—if you have told the truth, and if all succeed—your pardon and ample reward are assured to you. Your berth has been taken on board the *Ruyter*; you will sail to-morrow; you will thus be safe from the malice of the Strangers, who would follow you hither to revenge the death of their chiefs, Providence having chosen you to deliver those

three great criminals to justice. Heaven will bless you ! Go and wait for me at the door of the governor's house ; I will introduce you. The matter is so important that I do not hesitate to disturb him thus late in the night. Go quickly ! I will follow on my side."

The steps of Mahal were distinctly audible, as he withdrew precipitately, and then silence reigned once more in the house. Joshua returned to his desk, and hastily added these words to the dispatch which he had before commenced :

" Whatever may now happen, it will be impossible for Djalma to leave Batavia at present. You may rest quite satisfied; he will not be at Paris by the 13th of next February. As I foresaw, I shall have to be up all night. I am just going to the governor's. To-morrow I will add a few lines to this long statement, which the steamship *Ruyter* will convey to Europe."

Having locked up his papers, Joshua rang the bell loudly, and, to the great astonishment of his servants, not accustomed to see him leave home in the middle of the night, went in all haste to the residence of the governor of the island.

We now conduct the reader to the ruins of Tchandi.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE RUINS OF TCHANDI.

To the storm in the middle of the day, the approach of which so well served the Strangler's designs upon Djalma, has succeeded a calm and serene night. The disk of the moon rises slowly behind a mass of lofty ruins, situate on a hill, in the midst of a thick wood, about three leagues from Batavia.

Long ranges of stone, high walls of brick, fretted away by time, porticoes covered with parasitical vegetation, stand out boldly from the sheet of silver light which blends the horizon with the limpid blue of the heavens. Some rays of the moon, gliding through the opening on one of these porticoes, fall upon two colossal statues at the foot of an immense staircase, the loose stones of which are almost entirely concealed by grass, moss, and brambles.

The fragments of one of these statues, broken in the middle, lie strewed upon the ground ; the other, which remains whole and standing, is frightful to behold. It represents a man of gigantic proportions,

with a head three feet high ; the expression of the countenance is ferocious, eyes of brilliant slaty black are set beneath gray brows, the large, deep mouth gapes immoderately, and reptiles have made their nest between the lips of stone ; by the light of the moon a hideous swarm is there dimly visible. A broad girdle, adorned with symbolic ornaments, encircles the body of this statue, and fastens a long sword to its right side. The giant has four extended arms, and, in his great hands, he bears an elephant's head, a twisted serpent, a human skull, and a bird resembling a heron. The moon, shedding her light on the profile of this statue, serves to augment the weirdness of its aspect.

Here and there, inclosed in the half-crumbling walls of brick, are fragments of stone bass-reliefs, very boldly cut ; one of those in the best preservation represents a man with the head of an elephant, and the wings of a bat, devouring a child. Nothing can be more gloomy than these ruins, buried among thick trees of a dark green, covered with frightful emblems, and seen by the moonlight, in the midst of the deep silence of night.

Against one of the walls of this ancient temple, dedicated to some mysterious and

bloody Javanese divinity, leans a kind of hut, rudely constructed of fragments of brick and stone; the door, made of woven rushes, is open, and a red light streams from it, which throws its rays on the tall grass that covers the ground. Three men are assembled in this hovel, around a clay lamp, with a wick of cocoanut fiber steeped in palm-oil.

The first of these three, about forty years of age, is poorly clad in the European fashion; his pale, almost white, complexion, announces that he belongs to the mixed race, being offspring of a white father and Indian mother.

The second is a robust African negro, with thick lips, vigorous shoulders, and lank legs; his woolly hair is beginning to turn gray; he is covered with rags, and stands close beside the Indian. The third personage is asleep and stretched on a mat in the corner of the hovel.

These three men are the three Thuggee chiefs, who, obliged to fly from the continent of India, have taken refuge in Java, under the guidance of Mahal the Smugler.

“The Malay does not return,” said the half-blood, named Faringhea, the most redoubtable chief of this homicidal sect.

“In executing our orders he has perhaps been killed by Djalma.”

“The storm of this morning brought every reptile out of the earth,” said the negro; “the Malay must have been bitten and his body ere now a nest of serpents.”

“To serve the good work,” proceeded Faringhea, with a gloomy air, “one must know how to brave death.”

“And to inflict it,” added the negro.

A stifled cry, followed by some inarticulate words, here drew the attention of these two men, who hastily turned their heads in the direction of the sleeper. This latter was thirty years old at most. His beardless face, of a bright copper color, his robe of coarse stuff, his turban striped brown and yellow, showed that he belonged to the pure Hindoo race. His sleep appeared agitated by some painful vision; an abundant sweat streamed over his countenance, contracted by terror; he spoke in his dream, but his words were brief and broken, and accompanied with convulsive starts.

“Again that dream!” said Faringhea to the negro. “Always the remembrance of that man.”

“What man?”

“Do you not remember, how, five years ago, that savage Colonel Kennedy, butcher

of the Indians, came to the banks of the Ganges, to hunt the tiger, with twenty horses, four elephants, and fifty servants?"

"Yes, yes," said the negro; "and we three, hunters of men, made a better day's sport than he did. Kennedy, his horses, his elephants, and his numerous servants, did not get their tiger—but we got ours," he added, with grim irony. "Yes; Kennedy, that tiger with a human face, fell into our ambush, and the Brothers of the Good Work offered up their fine prey to our goddess Bowanee."

"If you remember, it was just at the moment when we gave the last tug to the cord round Kennedy's neck that we perceived on a sudden a traveler close at hand. He had seen us, and it was necessary to make away with him. Now, since that time," added Faringhea, "the remembrance of the murder of that man pursues our brother in his dreams," and he pointed to the sleeping Indian.

"And even when he is awake," said the negro, looking at Faringhea with a significant air.

"Listen!" said the other, again pointing to the Indian, who, in the agitation of his dream, recommenced talking in abrupt sentences; "listen! he is repeating the answers of the traveler, when we told

him he must die, or serve with us on Thuggee. His mind is still impressed—deeply impressed—with those words.”

And in fact, the Indian repeated aloud in his sleep a sort of mysterious dialogue, of which he himself supplied both questions and answers.

“Traveler,” said he, in a voice broken by sudden pauses, “why that black mark on your forehead, stretching from one temple to the other? It is a mark of doom, and your look is sad as death. Have you been a victim? come with us; Kallee will avenge you. You have suffered?”—“Yes, I have greatly suffered.”—“For a long time?”—“Yes, for a very long time.”—“You suffer even now?”—“Yes, even now.”—“What do you reserve for those who injure you?”—“My pity.”—“Will you not render blow for blow?”—“I will return love for hate.”—“Who are you, then, that render good for evil?”—“I am one who loves, and suffers, and forgives.”

“Brother, do you hear?” said the negro to Faringhea; “he has not forgotten the words of the traveler before his death.”

“The vision follows him. Listen! he will speak again. How pale he is!” Still under the influence of his dream, the Indian continued:

“Traveler, we are three; we are brave; we have your life in our hands—you have seen us sacrifice to the good work. Be one of us, or die—die—die! Oh, that look! Not thus—do not look at me thus!” As he uttered these last words, the Indian made a sudden movement, as if to keep off some approaching object, and awoke with a start. Then, passing his hand over his moist forehead, he looked round him with a bewildered eye.

“What! again this dream, brother?” said Faringhea. “For a bold hunter of men, you have a weak head. Luckily, you have a strong heart and arm.”

The other remained silent, his face buried in his hands; then he replied: “It is long since I last dreamed of that traveler.”

“Is he not dead?” said Faringhea, shrugging his shoulders. “Did you not yourself throw the cord around his neck?”

“Yes,” replied the Indian, shuddering.

“Did we not dig his grave by the side of Colonel Kennedy’s? Did we not bury him with the English butcher, under the sand and the rushes?” said the negro.

“Yes, we dug his grave,” said the Indian, trembling; “and yet, only a year ago, I was seated one evening at the gate of Bombay, waiting for one of our

brothers—the sun was setting behind the pagoda, to the right of the little hill—the scene is all before me now—I was seated under a fig-tree—when I heard a slow, firm, even step, and, as I turned round my head—I saw him—coming out of the town.”

“A vision,” said the negro; “always the same vision.”

“A vision,” added Faringhea, “or a vague resemblance.”

“I knew him by the black mark on his forehead; it was none but he. I remained motionless with fear, gazing at him with eyes aghast. He stopped, bending upon me his calm sad look. In spite of myself, I could not help exclaiming: ‘It is he!’—‘Yes,’ he replied, in his gentle voice, ‘it is I. Since all whom thou killest must needs live again,’ and he pointed to heaven as he spoke, ‘why shouldst thou kill? Hear me! I have just come from Java: I am going to the other end of the world, to a country of never-melting snow; but, here or there, on plains of fire or plains of ice, I shall still be the same. Even so is it with the souls of those who fall beneath thy *kalleepra*; in this world or up above, in this garb or in another, the soul must still be a soul; thou canst not smite it. Why then kill?’—and shaking his head

sorrowfully, he went on his way, walking slowly, with downcast eyes ; he ascended the hill of the pagoda ; I watched him as he went, without being able to move : at the moment the sun set, he was standing on the summit of the hill, his tall figure thrown out against the sky—and so he disappeared. Oh! it was he !” added the Indian with a shudder, after a long pause: “it was none but he.”

In this story the Indian had never varied, though he had often entertained his companions with the same mysterious adventure. This persistency on his part had the effect of shaking their incredulity, or at least of inducing them to seek some natural cause for this apparently super-human event.

“Perhaps,” said Faringhea, after a moment’s reflection, “the knot round the traveler’s neck got jammed, and some breath was left in him, the air may have penetrated the rushes, with which we covered his grave, and so life have returned to him.”

“No, no,” said the Indian, shaking his head ; “this man is not of our race.”

“Explain.”

“Now I know it.”

“What do you know?”

“Listen,” said the Indian, in a solemn

voice ; “ the number of victims that the children of Bowanee have sacrificed since the commencement of ages is nothing compared to the immense heap of dead and dying whom this terrible traveler leaves behind him in his murderous march.”

“ He ? ” cried the negro and Faringhea.

“ Yes, *he !* ” repeated the Hindoo, with a convinced accent that made its impression upon his companions. “ Hear me and tremble !—When I met this traveler at the gates of Bombay, he came from Java, and was going toward the north, he said. The very next day, the town was a prey to the cholera, and we learned, some time after, that this plague had first broken out here, in Java.”

“ That is true,” said the negro.

“ Hear me still further ! ” resumed the other. “ ‘ I am going toward the north, to a country of eternal snow,’ said the traveler to me. The cholera also went toward the north, passing through Muscat—Ispahan—Tauris—Tiflis—till it overwhelmed Siberia.”

“ True,” said Faringhea, becoming thoughtful.

“ And the cholera,” resumed the Indian, “ only traveled its five or six leagues a day—a man’s tramp—never

appeared in two places at once—but swept on slowly, steadily—even as a man proceeds.”

At the mention of this strange coincidence, the Hindoo's companions looked at each other in amazement. After a silence of some minutes, the awestruck negro said to the last speaker: “So you think that this man—”

“I think that this man, whom we killed, restored to life by some infernal divinity, has been commissioned to bear this terrible scourge over the earth, and to scatter round his steps that death from which he is himself secure. Remember!” added the Indian, with gloomy enthusiasm, “this awful wayfarer passed through Java—the cholera wasted Java. He passed through Bombay—the cholera wasted Bombay. He went toward the north—the cholera wasted the north.”

So saying, the Indian fell into a profound reverie. The negro and Faringhea were seized with gloomy astonishment.

The Indian spoke the truth as to the mysterious march (still unexplained) of that fearful malady, which has never been known to travel more than five or six leagues a day, or to appear simultaneously in two spots. Nothing can be more curious than to trace out, on the

maps prepared at the period in question, the slow, progressive course of this traveling pestilence, which offers to the astonished eye all the capricious incidents of a tourist's journey. Passing this way rather than that—selecting provinces in a country—towns in a province—one quarter in a town—one street in a quarter—one house in a street—having its place of residence and repose, and then continuing its slow, mysterious, fear inspiring march.

The words of the Hindoo, by drawing attention to these dreadful eccentricities, made a strong impression upon the minds of the negro and Faringhea—wild natures, brought by horrible doctrines to the monomania of murder.

Yes—for this also is an established fact—there have been in India members of an abominable community, who killed without motive, without passion—killed for the sake of killing—for the pleasure of murder—to substitute death for life—to make a living man a corpse, as they have themselves declared in one of their examinations.

The mind loses itself in the attempt to penetrate the causes of these monstrous phenomena. By what incredible series of events have men been induced to de-

vote themselves to this priesthood of destruction? Without doubt, such a religion could only flourish in countries given up, like India, to the most atrocious slavery, and to the most merciless iniquity of man to man.

Such a creed!—is it not the hate of exasperated humanity, wound up to its highest pitch by oppression?—May not this homicidal sect, whose origin is lost in the night of ages, have been perpetuated in these regions, as the only possible protest of slavery against despotism? May not an inscrutable wisdom have here made Phansegars, even as are made tigers and serpents?

What is most remarkable in this awful sect is the mysterious bond, which, uniting its members among themselves, separates them from all other men. They have laws and customs of their own, they support and help each other, but for them there is neither country nor family; they owe no allegiance save to a dark, invisible power, whose decrees they obey with blind submission, and in whose name they spread themselves abroad, to make corpses, according to their own savage expression.*

*The following are some passages from the Count de Warren's very curious book, "British

For some moments the three Stranglers had maintained a profound silence.

Outside the hut, the moon continued to throw great masses of white radiance, and tall bluish shadows, over the imposing fabric of the ruins ; the stars sparkled in the heavens ; from time to time a faint breeze rustled through the thick and varnished leaves of the bananas and the palms.

India in 1831 ” :—“ Besides the robbers, who kill for the sake of the booty they hope to find upon travelers, there is a class of assassins, forming an organized society, with chiefs of their own, a slang-language, a science, a freemasonry, and even a religion, which has its fanaticism and its devotion, its agents, emissaries, allies, its militant forces, and its passive adherents, who contribute their money to the *good work*. This is the community of the Thugs or Phansegars (deceivers or stranglers, from *thugna*, to deceive, and *phansna*, to strangle), a religious and economical society, which speculates with the human race by exterminating men ; its origin is lost in the night of ages.

“ Until 1810 their existence was unknown, not only to the European conquerors, but even to the native governments. Between the years 1816 and 1830, several of their bands were taken in the fact, and punished ; but, until this last epoch, all the revelations made on the subject by officers of great experience, had appeared too monstrous to obtain the attention or belief of the public ;

The pedestal of the gigantic statue, which, still entire, stood on the left side of the portico, rested upon large flagstones, half hidden with brambles. Suddenly, one of these stones appeared to fall in; and from the aperture which thus formed itself without noise a man, dressed in uniform, half protruded his body, looked carefully around him, and listened.

Seeing the rays of the lamp, which they had been rejected and despised as the dreams of a heated imagination. And yet, for many years, at the very least for half a century, this social wound had been frightfully on the increase, devouring the population from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin, and from Cutch to Assam.

“It was in the year 1830 that the revelations of a celebrated chief, whose life was spared on condition of his denouncing his accomplices, laid bare the whole system. The basis of the Thuggee Society is a religious belief—the worship of Bowanee, a gloomy divinity, who is only pleased with carnage, and detests above all things the human race. Her most agreeable sacrifices are human victims, and the more of these her disciple may have offered up in this world, the more he will be recompensed in the next by all the delights of soul and sense, by women always beautiful, and joys eternally renewed. If the assassin meets the scaffold in his career, he dies with the enthusiasm of a martyr, because he expects his reward. To obey his divine mistress, he murders without anger and without remorse,

lighted the interior of the hovel, tremble upon the tall grass, he turned round to make a signal, and soon, accompanied by two other soldiers, he ascended, with the greatest silence and precaution, the last steps of the subterranean staircase, and went gliding among the ruins. For a few moments their moving shadows were thrown upon the moonlit ground; then they disappeared behind some fragments of broken wall.

the old man, woman and child; while, to his fellow-religionists, he may be charitable, humane, generous, devoted, and may share all in common with them, because, like himself, they are the ministers and adopted children of Bowanee. The destruction of his fellow-creatures, not belonging to his community—the diminution of the human race—that is the primary object of his pursuit; it is not as a means of gain, for, though plunder may be frequent and doubtless an agreeable accessory, it is only secondary in his estimation. Destruction is his end, his celestial mission, his calling; it is also a delicious passion, the most captivating of all sports—this hunting of men!—‘You find great pleasure,’ said one of those that were condemned, ‘in tracking the wild beast to his den, in attacking the boar, the tiger, because there is danger to brave, energy and courage to display. Think how this attraction must be redoubled, when the contest is with man, when it is man who is to be destroyed. Instead of the single faculty of courage, all must be called into

At the instant when the large stone resumed its place and level, the heads of many other soldiers might have been seen lying close in the excavation. The half-caste, the Indian, and the negro, still seated thoughtfully in the hut, did not perceive what was passing.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE AMBUSCADE.

THE half-blooded Faringhea, wishing doubtless to escape from the dark thoughts which the words of the Indian on the mysterious course of the cholera had raised action—courage, cunning, foresight, eloquence, intrigue. What springs to put in motion! what plans to develop! To sport with all the passions, to touch the chords of love and friendship, and so draw the prey into one's net—that is a glorious chase—it is a delight, a rapture, I tell you.'

"Whoever was in India in the years 1831 and 1832, must remember the stupor and affright which the discovery of this vast infernal machine spread through all classes of society. A great number of magistrates and administrators of provinces refused to believe in it, and could not be brought to comprehend that such a system had so long preyed on the body politic, under their eyes, as it were, silently, and without betraying itself."—See "British India in 1831," by Count Edward de Warren, 2 vols, in 8vo. Paris, 1844.—E. S.

within him, abruptly changed the subject of conversation. His eye shone with lurid fire, and his countenance took an expression of savage enthusiasm, as he cried : “Bowanee will always watch over us, intrepid hunters of men ! Courage, brothers, courage ! The world is large ; our prey is everywhere. The English may force us to quit India, three chiefs of the good work—but what matter ? We leave there our brethren, secret, numerous, and terrible, as black as scorpions, whose presence is only known by their mortal sting. Exile will widen our domains. Brother, you shall have America !” said he to the Hindoo, with an inspired air. “Brother, you shall have Africa !” said he to the negro. “Brothers, I will take Europe ! Wherever men are to be found, there must be oppressors and victims—wherever there are victims, there must be hearts swollen with hate—it is for us to inflame that hate with all the ardor of vengeance ! It is for us, servants of Bowanee, to draw toward us, by seducing wiles, all whose zeal, courage, and audacity may be useful to the cause. Let us rival each other in devotion and sacrifices ; let us lend each other strength, help, support ! That all who are not with us may be our prey, let us stand alone in the midst of all, against

all, and in spite of all. For us, there must be neither country nor family. Our family is composed of our brethren; our country is the world."

This kind of savage eloquence made a deep impression on the negro and the Indian, over whom Faringhea generally exercised considerable influence, his intellectual powers being very superior to theirs, though they were themselves two of the most eminent chiefs of this bloody association. "Yes, you are right, brother!" cried the Indian, sharing the enthusiasm of Faringhea; "the world is ours. Even here, in Java, let us leave some trace of our passage. Before we depart, let us establish the good work in this island; it will increase quickly, for here also is great misery, and the Dutch are rapacious as the English. Brother, I have seen in the marshy rice-fields of this island, always fatal to those who cultivate them, men whom absolute want forced to the deadly task—they were livid as corpses—some of them, worn out with sickness, fatigue and hunger, fell—never to rise again. Brothers, the good work will prosper in this country!"

"The other evening," said the half-caste, "I was on the banks of the lake, behind a rock; a young woman came

there—a few rags hardly covered her lean and sun-scorched body—in her arms she held a little child, which she pressed weeping to her milkless breast. She kissed it three times, and said to it: ‘You, at least, shall not be so unhappy as your father’—and she threw it into the lake. It uttered one wail, and disappeared. On this cry, the alligators, hidden among the reeds, leaped joyfully into the water. There are mothers here who kill their children out of pity.—Brothers, the good work will prosper in this country.”

“This morning,” said the negro, “while they tore the flesh of one of his black slaves with whips, a withered old merchant of Batavia left his country-house to come to the town. Lolling in his palanquin, he received, with languid indolence, the sad caresses of two of those girls, whom he had bought, to people his harem, from parents too poor to give them food. The palanquin, which held this little man and the girls, was carried by twelve young and robust men. There are here, yousee, mothers who in their misery sell their own daughters—slaves that are scourged—men that carry other men, like beasts of burden.—Brothers, the good work will prosper in this country.”

“Yes, in this country—and in every

land of oppression, distress, corruption, and slavery."

"Could we but induce Djalma to join us, as Mahal the Smuggler advised," said the Indian, "our voyage to Java would doubly profit us; for we should then number among our band this brave and enterprising youth, who has so many motives to hate mankind."

"He will soon be here; let us envenom his resentments."

"Remind him of his father's death!"

"Of the massacre of his people!"

"His own captivity!"

"Only let hatred inflame his heart, and he will be ours."

The negro, who had remained for some time lost in thought, said suddenly: "Brothers! suppose Mahal the Smuggler were to betray us?"

"He?" cried the Hindoo, almost with indignation; "he gave us an asylum on board his bark; he secured our flight from the continent; he is again to take us with him to Bombay, where we shall find vessels for America, Europe, Africa."

"What interest would Mahal have to betray us?" said Faringhea.

"Nothing could save him from the vengeance of Bowanee, and that he knows."

"Well," said the black, "he promised

to get Djalma to come hither this evening, and, once among us, he must needs be our own."

"Was it not the Smuggler who told us to order the Malay to enter the ajoupa of Djalma, to surprise him during his sleep, and, instead of killing him as he might have done, to trace the name of Bowanee upon his arm? Djalma will thus learn to judge of the resolution, the cunning and obedience of our brethren, and he will understand what he has to hope or fear from such men. Be it through admiration or through terror, he must become one of us."

"But if he refuse to join us, notwithstanding the reasons he has to hate mankind?"

"Then—Bowanee will decide his fate," said Faringhea, with a gloomy look; "I have my plan."

"But will the Malay succeed in surprising Djalma during his sleep?" said the negro.

"There is none bolder, more agile, more dexterous, than the Malay," said Faringhea. "He once had the daring to surprise in her den a black panther, as she suckled her cub. He killed the dam, and took away the young one, which he afterward sold to some European ship's captain."

"The Malay has succeeded!" exclaimed the Indian, listening to a singular kind of hoot, which sounded through the profound silence of the night and of the wood.

"Yes, it is the scream of the vulture seizing its prey," said the negro, listening in his turn: "it is also the signal of our brethren, after they have seized their prey."

In a few minutes the Malay appeared at the door of the hut. He had wound around him a broad length of cotton, adorned with bright colored stripes.

"Well," said the negro, anxiously; "have you succeeded?"

"Djalma must bear all his life the mark of the good work," said the Malay proudly. "To reach him I was forced to offer up to Bowanee a man who crossed my path—I have left his body under the brambles, near the ajoupa. But Djalma is marked with a sign. Mahal the Smuggler was the first to know it."

"And Djalma did not awake?" said the Indian, confounded by the Malay's adroitness.

"Had he awoke," replied the other, calmly, "I should have been a dead man—as I was charged to spare his life."

"Because his life may be more useful to us than his death," said the half-caste.

Then, addressing the Malay, he added :
“ Brother, in risking life for the good work, you have done to-day what we did yesterday, what we may do again to-morrow. This time you obey ; another, you will command.”

“ We all belong to Bowanee,” answered the Malay. “ What is there yet to do ?—I am ready.” While he thus spoke, his face was turned toward the door of the hut ; on a sudden, he said in a low voice :
“ Here is Djalma. He approaches the cabin. Mahal has not deceived us.”

“ He must not see me yet,” said Faringhea, retiring to an obscure corner of the cabin, and hiding himself under a mat ;
“ try to persuade him. If he resists—I have my project.”

Hardly had Faringhea disappeared, saying these words, when Djalma arrived at the door of the hovel. At sight of those three personages with their forbidding aspect, Djalma started in surprise. But ignorant that these men belonged to the Phansegars, and knowing that, in a country where there are no inns, travelers often pass the night under a tent, or beneath the shelter of some ruins, he continued to advance toward them. After the first moment, he perceived by the complexion and the dress of one of these

men, that he was an Indian, and he accosted him in the Hindoo language: "I thought to have found here a European—a Frenchman—"

"The Frenchman is not yet come," replied the Indian; "but he will not be long."

Guessing by Djalma's question the means which Mahal had employed to draw him into the snare, the Indian hoped to gain time by prolonging his error.

"You knew this Frenchman?" asked Djalma of the Phansegar.

"He appointed us to meet him here, as he did you," answered the Indian.

"For what?" inquired Djalma, more and more astonished.

"You will know when he arrives."

"General Simon told you to be at this place?"

"Yes, General Simon," replied the Indian.

There was a moment's pause, during which Djalma sought in vain to explain to himself this mysterious adventure. "And who are you?" asked he, with a look of suspicion; for the gloomy silence of the Phansegar's two companions, who stared fixedly at each other, began to give him some uneasiness.

"We are yours, if you will be ours," answered the Indian.

“I have no need of you—nor you of me.”

“Who knows?”

“I know it.”

“You are deceived. The English killed your father, a king; made you a captive; proscribed you, you have lost all your possessions.”

At this cruel reminder, the countenance of Djalma darkened. He started, and a bitter smile curled his lip. The Phansegar continued:

“Your father was just and brave—beloved by his subjects—they called him ‘Father of the Generous,’ and he was well named. Will you leave his death unavenged? Will the hate, which gnaws your heart, be without fruit?”

“My father died with arms in his hand. I revenged his death on the English whom I killed in war. He, who has since been a father to me, and who fought also in the same cause, told me that it would now be madness to attempt to recover my territory from the English. When they gave me my liberty, I swore never again to set foot in India—and I keep the oaths I make.”

“Those who despoiled you, who took you captive, who killed your father—were men. Are there not other men on whom

you can avenge yourself? Let your hate fall upon them!"

"You, who speak thus of men, are not a man!"

"I, and those who resemble me, are more than men. We are, to the rest of the human race, what the bold hunter is to the wild beasts, which they run down in the forest. Will you be, like us, more than a man? Will you glut surely, largely, safely, the hate which devours your heart, for all the evil done you?"

"Your words become more and more obscure: I have no hatred in my heart," said Djalma. "When an enemy is worthy of me, I fight with him; when he is unworthy, I despise him. So that I have no hate—either for brave men or cowards."

"Treachery!" cried the negro, on a sudden, pointing with rapid gesture to the door, for Djalma and the Indian had now withdrawn a little from it, and were standing in one corner of the hovel.

At the shout of the negro, Faringhea, who had not been perceived by Djalma, threw off the mat which covered him, drew his crease, started up like a tiger, and with one bound was out of the cabin. Then, seeing a body of soldiers advancing cautiously in a circle, he dealt one of them

a mortal stroke, threw down two others, and disappeared in the midst of the ruins. All this passed so instantaneously, that, when Djalma turned round, to ascertain the cause of the negro's cry of alarm, Faringhea had already disappeared.

The muskets of several soldiers, crowding to the door, were immediately pointed at Djalma and the three Stranglers, while others went in pursuit of Faringhea. The negro, the Malay, and the Indian, seeing the impossibility of resistance, exchanged a few rapid words, and offered their hands to the cords, with which some of the soldiers had provided themselves.

The Dutch captain, who commanded the squad, entered the cabin at this moment. "And this other one?" said he, pointing out Djalma to the soldiers, who were occupied in binding the three Phansegars.

"Each in his turn, captain!" said an old sergeant. "We come to him next."

Djalma had remained petrified with surprise, not understanding what was passing round him; but, when he saw the sergeant and two soldiers approach with ropes to bind him, he repulsed them with violent indignation, and rushed toward the door where stood the officer. The soldiers, who had supposed that Djalma would submit to his fate with the same

impassibility as his companions, were astonished by this resistance, and recoiled some paces, being struck, in spite of themselves, with the noble and dignified air of the son of Kadja-sing.

“Why would you bind me like these men?” cried Djalma, addressing himself in Hindostance to the officer, who understood that language from his long service in the Dutch colonies.

“Why would we bind you, wretch?—because you form part of this band of assassins. What?” added the officer in Dutch, speaking to the soldiers, “are you afraid of him? Tie the cord tight about his wrists: there will soon be another about his neck.”

“You are mistaken,” said Djalma, with a dignity and calmness which astonished the officer; “I have hardly been in this place a quarter of an hour—I do not know these men. I came here to meet a Frenchman.”

“Not a Phansegar like them? Who will believe the falsehood?”

“Them!” cried Djalma, with so natural a movement and expression of horror that with a sign the officer stopped the soldiers, who were again advancing to bind the son of Kadja-sing; “these men form part of that horrible band of murderers! and you

accuse me of being their accomplice ! Oh, in this case, sir, I am perfectly at ease," said the young man, with a smile of disdain.

"It will not be sufficient to say that you are tranquil," replied the officer ; " thanks to their confessions, we now know by what mysterious signs to recognize the Thugs."

"I repeat, sir, that I hold these murderers in the greatest horror, and that I came here—"

The negro, interrupting Djalma, said to the officer with a ferocious joy : " You have hit it ; the sons of the good work do know each other by marks tattooed on their skin. For us, the hour is come—we give our necks to the cord. Often enough have we twined it round the necks of those who served not with us the good work. Now, look at our arms, and look at the arm of this youth ! "

The officer, misinterpreting the words of the negro, said to Djalma : " It is quite clear, that if, as this negro tells us, you do not bear on your arm the mysterious symbol—(we are going to assure ourselves of the fact)—and if you can explain your presence here in a satisfactory manner, you may be at liberty within two hours."

"You do not understand me," said the negro to the officer ; " Prince Djalma is

one of us, for he bears on his left arm the name of Bowanee."

"Yes! he is like us, a son of Kalle!" added the Malay.

"He is like us, a Phansegar," said the Indian.

The three men, irritated at the horror which Djalma had manifested on learning that they were Phansegars, took a savage pride in making it be believed that the son of Kadja-sing belonged to their frightful association.

"What have you to answer?" said the officer to Djalma. The latter again gave a look of disdainful pity, raised with his right hand his long, wide left sleeve, and displayed his naked arm.

"What audacity!" cried the officer, for on the inner part of the forearm, a little below the bend, the name of the Bowanee, in bright red Hindoo characters, was distinctly visible. The officer ran to the Malay, and uncovered his arm; he saw the same word, the same signs. Not yet satisfied, he assured himself that the negro and the Indian were likewise so marked.

"Wretch!" cried he, turning furiously toward Djalma; "you inspire even more horror than your accomplices. Bind him like a cowardly assassin," added he to the soldiers, "like a cowardly assassin, who

lies upon the brink of the grave, for his execution will not be long delayed. ”

Struck with stupor, Djalma, who for some moments had kept his eye riveted on the fatal mark, was unable to pronounce a word, or make the least movement : his powers of thought seemed to fail him, in presence of this incomprehensible fact.

“ Would you dare deny this sign ? ” said the officer to him with indignation.

“ I cannot deny what I see—what is, ” said Djalma, quite overcome.

“ It is lucky that you confess at last, ” replied the officer. “ Soldiers, keep watch over him and his accomplices—you answer for them. ”

Almost believing himself the sport of some wild dream, Djalma offered no resistance, but allowed himself to be bound and removed with mechanical passiveness. The officer, with part of his soldiers, hoped still to discover Faringhea among the ruins ; but his search was vain, and, after spending an hour in fruitless endeavors, he set out for Batavia, where the escort of the prisoners had arrived before him.

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Some hours after these events M. Joshua van Dael thus finished his long dispatch, addressed to M. Rodin of Paris :

“ Circumstances were such that I could

not act otherwise, and, taking all into consideration, it is a very small evil for a great good. Three murderers are delivered over to justice, and the temporary arrest of Djalma will only serve to make his innocence shine forth with redoubled luster.

“Already this morning, I went to the governor, to protest in favor of our young prince. ‘As it was through me,’ I said, ‘that those three great criminals fell into the hands of the authorities, let them at least show me some gratitude, by doing everything to render clear as day the innocence of Prince Djalma, so interesting by reason of his misfortunes and noble qualities. Most certainly,’ I added, ‘when I came yesterday to inform the governor that the Phansegars would be found assembled in the ruins of Tchandi, I was far from anticipating that any one would confound with those wretches the adopted son of General Simon, an excellent man, with whom I have had for some time the most honorable relations. We must then, at any cost, discover the inconceivable mystery that has placed Djalma in this dangerous position; and,’ I continued, ‘so convinced am I of his innocence, that, for his own sake, I would not ask for any favor on his behalf. He will

have sufficient courage and dignity to wait patiently in prison for the day of justice.' In all this, you see, I spoke nothing but the truth, and had not to reproach myself with the least deception, for nobody in the world is more convinced than I am of Djalma's innocence.

"The governor answered me as I expected, that morally he felt as certain as I did of the innocence of the young prince, and would treat him with all possible consideration; but that it was necessary for justice to have its course, because it would be the only way of demonstrating the falsehood of the accusation, and discovering by what unaccountable fatality that mysterious sign was tattooed upon Djalma's arm.

"Mahal the Smuggler, who alone could enlighten justice on this subject, will in another hour have quitted Batavia, to go on board the *Ruyter*, which will take him to Egypt; for he has a note from me to the captain, to certify that he is the person for whom I engaged and paid the passage. At the same time, he will be the bearer of this long dispatch, for the *Ruyter* is to sail in an hour, and the last letter-bag for Europe was made up yesterday evening. But I wished to see

the governor this morning, before closing the present.

“Thus then is Prince Djalma enforcedly detained for a month, and, this opportunity of the *Ruyter* once lost, it is materially impossible that the young Indian can be in France by the 13th of next February. You see, therefore, that, even as you ordered, so have I acted according to the means at my disposal—considering only the end which justifies them—for you tell me a great interest of the Society is concerned.

“In your hands, I have been what we all ought to be in the hands of our superiors—a mere instrument: since, for the greater glory of God, we become corpses with regard to the will.* Men may deny our unity and power, and the times appear opposed to us; but circumstances only change; we are ever the same.

“Obedience and courage, secrecy and patience, craft and audacity, union and devotion—these become us, who have the

* It is known that the doctrine of passive and absolute obedience, the mainspring of the Society of Jesus, is summed up in those terrible words of the dying Loyola: “Every member of the Order shall be, in the hands of his superiors, even as a corpse (*perinde ac cadaver*).”—E. S.

world for our country, our brethren for family, Rome for our queen ! J. V.”

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About ten o'clock in the morning Mahal the Smuggler set out with this dispatch (sealed) in his possession, to board the *Ruyter*. An hour later, the dead body of this same Mahal, strangled by Thuggee, lay concealed beneath some reeds on the edge of a desert strand, whither he had gone to take boat to join the vessel.

When, at a subsequent period, after the departure of the steamship, they found the corpse of the smuggler, M. Joshua sought in vain for the voluminous packet which he had intrusted to his care. Neither was there any trace of the note which Mahal was to have delivered to the captain of the *Ruyter*, in order to be received as passenger.

Finally, the searches and bush-whacking ordered throughout the country for the purpose of discovering Faringhea were of no avail. The dangerous chief of the Stranglers was never seen again in Java.

CHAPTER XXIII.

M. RODIN.

THREE months have elapsed since Djalma was thrown into Batavia Prison accused of belonging to the murderous gang of Megpunnas. The following scene takes place in France, at the commencement of the month of February, 1832, in Cardoville Manor House, an old feudal habitation standing upon the tall cliffs of Picardy not far from Saint Valery, a dangerous coast on which almost every year many ships are totally wrecked, being driven on shore by the northwesterners, which render the navigation of the Channel so perilous.

From the interior of the castle is heard the howling of a violent tempest, which has arisen during the night; a frequent formidable noise, like the discharge of artillery, thunders in the distance, and is repeated by the echoes of the shore; it is the sea breaking with fury against the high rocks which are overlooked by the ancient Manor House.

It is about seven o'clock in the morning. Daylight is not yet visible through the windows of a large room situate on the ground-floor. In this apartment, in which

a lamp is burning, a woman of about sixty years of age, with a simple and honest countenance, dressed as a rich farmer's wife of Picardy, is already occupied with her needle-work, notwithstanding the early hour. Close by, the husband of this woman, about the same age as herself, is seated at a large table, sorting and putting up in bags divers samples of wheat and oats. The face of this white-haired man is intelligent and open, announcing good sense and honesty, enlivened by a touch of rustic humor; he wears a shooting-jacket of green cloth, and long gaiters of tan-colored leather, which half conceal his black velvet breeches.

The terrible storm which rages without renders still more agreeable the picture of this peaceful interior. A rousing fire burns in a broad chimney-place faced with white marble, and throws its joyous light on the carefully polished floor; nothing can be more cheerful than the old-fashioned chintz panels over the door painted with pastoral scenes in the style of Watteau. A clock of Sevres china, and rosewood furniture inlaid with green—quaint and portly furniture, twisted into all sorts of grotesque shapes—complete the decorations of this apartment.

Out-doors, the gale continued to howl

furiously, and sometimes a gust of wind would rush down the chimney, or shake the fastenings of the windows. The man who was occupied in sorting the samples of grain was M. Dupont, bailiff of Cardo-ville manor.

"Holy Virgin!" said his wife; "what dreadful weather, my dear! This M. Rodin, who is to come here this morning, as the Princess de Saint-Dizier's steward announced to us, picked out a very bad day for it."

"Why, in truth, I have rarely heard such a hurricane. If M. Rodin has never seen the sea in its fury, he may feast his eyes to-day with the sight."

"What can it be that brings this M. Rodin, my dear?"

"Faith! I know nothing about it. The steward tells me in his letter to show M. Rodin the greatest attention, and to obey him as if he were my master. It will be for him to explain himself, and for me to execute his orders, since he comes on the part of the princess."

"By rights he should come from Made-moiselle Adrienne, as the land belongs to her since the death of the duke her father."

"Yes; but the princess being aunt to the young lady, her steward manages

Mademoiselle Adrienne's affairs — so whether one or the other, it amounts to the same thing."

"Maybe M. Rodin means to buy the estate. Though, to be sure, that stout lady who came from Paris last week on purpose to see the chateau appeared to have a great wish for it."

At these words the bailiff began to laugh with a sly look.

"What is there to laugh at, Dupont?" asked his wife, a very good creature, but not famous for intelligence or penetration.

"I laugh," answered Dupont, "to think of the face and figure of that enormous woman: with such a look, who the devil would call themselves Madame de la Sainte Colombe—Mrs. Holy Dove? A pretty saint, and a pretty dove, truly! She is round as a hogshead, with the voice of a town-crier, has gray mustaches, like an old grenadier, and, without her knowing it, I heard her say to her servant: 'Stir your stumps, *my hearty!*'—and yet she calls herself Sainte Colombe."

"How hard on her you are, Dupont; a body don't choose one's name. And, if she has a beard, it is not the lady's fault."

"No—but it is her fault to call herself Sainte Colombe. Do you imagine it her true name? Ah, my poor Catherine, you are yet very green in some things."

“While you, my poor Dupont, are well read in slander! This lady seems very respectable. The first thing she asked for on arriving was the chapel of the castle, of which she had heard speak. She even said that she would make some embellishments in it, and, when I told her we had no church in this little place, she appeared quite vexed not to have a curate in the village.”

“Oh, to be sure! that’s the first thought of your upstarts—to play the great lady of the parish, like your titled people.”

“Madame de la Sainte Colombe need not play the great lady, because she is one.”

“She! a great lady? Oh, lor’!”

“Yes—only see how she was dressed, in scarlet gown, and violet gloves like a bishop’s; and, when she took off her bonnet, she had a diamond band round her head-dress of false, light hair, and diamond ear-drops as large as my thumb, and diamond rings on every finger! None of your tuppenny beauties would wear so many diamonds in the middle of the day.”

“You are a pretty judge!”

“That is not all.”

“Do you mean to say there’s more?”

“She talked of nothing but dukes, and

marquises, and counts, and very rich gentlemen, who visit at her house, and are her most intimate friends; and then, when she saw the summer house in the park, half-burnt by the Prussians, which our late master never rebuilt, she asked: 'What are those ruins there?' and I answered: 'Madame, it was in the time of the Allies that the pavilion was burned.'—'Oh, my dear,' cried she; 'our allies, good, dear allies! they and the Restoration began my fortune!' So you see, Dupont, I said to myself directly: 'She was no doubt one of the noble women who fled abroad—'

"Madame de Sainte Colombe!" cried the bailiff, laughing heartily. "Oh, my poor, poor wife!"

"Oh, it is all very well; but because you have been three years at Paris, don't think yourself a conjuror."

"Catherine, let's drop it: you will make me say some folly, and there are certain things which dear, good creatures like you need never know."

"I cannot tell what you are driving at; only try to be less slanderous—for after all, should Madame de la Sainte Colombe buy the estate, will you be sorry to remain as her bailiff, eh?"

"Not I—for we are getting old, my

good Catherine; we have lived here twenty years, and we have been too honest to provide for our old days by pilfering—and truly, at our age, it would be hard to seek another place, which perhaps we should not find. What I regret is, that Mademoiselle Adrienne should not keep the land; it seems that she wished to sell it, against the will of the princess.”

“Good gracious, Dupont! is it not very extraordinary that Mademoiselle Adrienne should have the disposal of her large fortune so early in life?”

“Faith! simple enough. Our young lady, having no father or mother, is mistress of her property, besides having a famous little will of her own. Dost remember, ten years ago, when the count brought her down here one summer?—what an imp of mischief! and then what eyes! eh?—how they sparkled, even then!”

“It is true that Mademoiselle Adrienne had in her look—an expression—a very uncommon expression for her age.”

“If she has kept what her witching, luring face promised, she must be very pretty by this time, notwithstanding the peculiar color of her hair—for, between ourselves, if she had been a tradesman’s daughter, instead of a young lady of high birth, they would have called it red.”

“There again ! more slander !”

“What ? against Mademoiselle Adrienne ? Heaven forbid ! I always thought that she would be as good as pretty, and it is not speaking ill of her to say she has red hair. On the contrary, it always appears to me so fine, so bright, so sunny, and to suit so well her snowy complexion and black eyes, that in truth I would not have had it other than it was ; and I am sure, that now this very color of her hair, which would be a blemish in any one else, must only add to the charm of Mademoiselle Adrienne’s face. She must have such a sweet vixen look !”

“Oh ! to be candid, she really was a vixen—always running about the park, aggravating her governess, climbing the trees—in fact, playing all manner of naughty tricks.”

“I grant you, Mademoiselle Adrienne was a chip of the old block ; but then what wit, what engaging ways, and above all, what a good heart !”

“Yes—that she certainly had. Once I remember she gave her shawl and her new merino frock to a poor little beggar girl, and came back to the house in her petticoat and bare arms.”

“Oh, an excellent heart—but headstrong—terribly headstrong !”

“Yes—that she was; and ’tis likely to finish badly, for it seems that she does things at Paris—oh! such things—”

“What things?”

“Oh, my dear! I can hardly venture—”

“Well, but what are they?”

“Why,” said the worthy dame, with a sort of embarrassment and confusion, which showed how much she was shocked by such enormities, “they say that Mademoiselle Adrienne never sets foot in a church, but lives in a kind of heathen temple in her aunt’s garden, where she has masked women to dress her up like a goddess, and scratches them very often, because she gets tipsy—without mentioning that every night she plays on a hunting-horn of massive gold—all which causes the utmost grief and despair to her poor aunt the princess.”

Here the bailiff burst into a fit of laughter, which interrupted his wife. “Now tell me,” said he, when this first access of hilarity was over, “where did you get these fine stories about Mademoiselle Adrienne?”

“From René’s wife, who went to Paris to look for a child to nurse; she called at Saint-Dizier House to see Madame Grivois, her godmother.—Now, Madame

Grivois is first bedchamber-woman to the princess—and she it was who told her all this—and surely she ought to know, being in the house.”

“ Yes, a fine piece of goods that Grivois! Once she was a regular bad ’un, but now she professes to be as over-nice as her mistress ; like master like man; they say. The princess herself, who is now so stiff and starched, knew how to carry on a lively game in her time. Fifteen years ago, she was no such prude : do you remember that handsome colonel of hussars, who was in garrison at Abbeville—an exiled noble who had served in Russia, to whom the Bourbons gave a regiment on the Restoration ? ”

“ Yes, yes—I remember him ; but you are really too backbiting.”

“ Not a bit—I only speak the truth. The colonel spent his whole time here, and every one said he was very warm with this same princess, who is now such a saint. Oh ! those were the jolly times. Every evening, some new entertainment at the château. What a fellow that colonel was to set things going ; how well he could act a play !—I remember—”

The bailiff was unable to proceed. A stout maid servant, wearing the costume and cap of Picardy, entered in haste, and

thus addressed her mistress: "Madame, there is a person here that wants to speak to master; he has come in the post-master's calash from Saint-Valery, and he says that he is M. Rodin."

"M. Rodin?" said the bailiff rising.
"Show him in directly!"

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A moment after, M. Rodin made his appearance. According to his custom, he was dressed even more than plainly. With an air of great humility, he saluted the bailiff and his wife, and at a sign from her husband, the latter withdrew.

The cadaverous countenance of M. Rodin, his almost invisible lips, his little reptile eyes, half concealed by their flabby lids, and the sordid style of his dress, rendered his general aspect far from prepossessing; yet this man knew how, when it was necessary, to affect, with diabolical art, so much sincerity and good nature—his words were so affectionate and subtly penetrating—that the disagreeable feeling of repugnance, which the first sight of him generally inspired, wore off little by little, and he almost always finished by involving his dupe or victim in the tortuous windings of an eloquence as pliant as it was honeyed and perfidious; for ugliness

and evil have their fascination, as well as what is good and fair.

The honest bailiff looked at this man with surprise, when he thought of the pressing recommendation of the steward of the Princess de Saint-Dizier; he had expected to see quite another sort of personage, and, hardly able to dissemble his astonishment, he said to him: "Is it to M. Rodin that I have the honor to speak?"

"Yes, sir;—and here is another letter from the steward of the Princess de Saint-Dizier."

"Pray, sir, draw near the fire, while I just see what is in this letter. The weather is so bad," continued the bailiff, obligingly, "may I not offer you some refreshment?"

"A thousand thanks, my dear sir; I am off again in an hour."

While M. Dupont read, M. Rodin threw inquisitive glances round the chamber; like a man of skill and experience, he had frequently drawn just and useful inductions from those little appearances, which, revealing a taste or habit, give at the same time some notion of a character; on this occasion, however, his curiosity was at fault.

"Very good, sir," said the bailiff, when he had finished reading; "the steward renews his recommendation, and tells me

to attend implicitly to your commands."

"Well, sir, they will amount to very little, and I shall not trouble you long."

"It will be no trouble, but an honor."

"Nay, I know how much your time must be occupied, for, as soon as one enters this château, one is struck with the good order and perfect keeping of everything in it—which proves, my dear sir, what excellent care you take of it."

"Oh, sir, you flatter me."

"Flatter you?—a poor old man like myself has something else to think of. But to come to business: there is a room here which is called the Green Chamber?"

"Yes, sir; the room which the late Count-Duke de Cardoville used for a study."

"You will have the goodness to take me there."

"Unfortunately it is not in my power to do so. After the death of the Count-Duke, and when the seals were removed, a number of papers were shut up in a cabinet in that room, and the lawyers took the keys with them to Paris."

"Here are those keys," said M. Rodin, showing to the bailiff a large and a small key tied together.

"Oh, sir! that is different. You come to look for papers?"

“ Yes—for certain papers—and also for a small mahogany casket, with silver claps—do you happen to know it ? ”

“ Yes, sir ; I have often seen it on the count’s writing table. It must be in the large, lacquered cabinet, of which you have the key.”

“ You will conduct me to this chamber, as authorized by the Princess de Saint-Dizier ? ”

“ Yes, sir ; the princess continues in good health ? ”

“ Perfectly so. She lives altogether above worldly things.”

“ And Mademoiselle Adrienne ? ”

“ Alas, my dear sir ! ” said M. Rodin, with a sigh of deep contrition and grief.

“ Good heaven, sir ! has any calamity happened to Mademoiselle Adrienne ? ”

“ In what sense do you mean it ? ”

“ Is she ill ? ”

“ No, no—she is, unfortunately, as well as she is beautiful.”

“ Unfortunately ! ” cried the bailiff, in surprise.

“ Alas, yes ! for when beauty, youth, and health are joined to an evil spirit of revolt and perversity—to a character which certainly has not its equal upon earth—it would be far better to be deprived of those dangerous advantages,

which only become so many causes of perdition. But I conjure you, my dear sir, let us talk of something else : this subject is too painful," said M. Rodin, with a voice of deep emotion, lifting the tip of his little finger to the corner of his right eye, as if to stop a rising tear.

The bailiff did not see the tear, but he saw the gesture, and he was struck with the change in M. Rodin's voice. He answered him therefore, with much sympathy : " Pardon my indiscretion, sir ; I really did not know—"

" It is I who should ask pardon for this involuntary display of feeling—tears are so rare with old men—but if you had seen, as I have, the despair of that excellent princess, whose only fault has been too much kindness, too much weakness, with regard to her niece—by which she has encouraged her—but, once more, let us talk of something else, my dear sir ! "

After a moment's pause, during which M. Rodin seemed to recover from his emotion, he said to Dupont : " One part of my mission, my dear sir—that which relates to the Green Chamber—I have now told you ; but there is yet another. Before coming to it, however, I must remind you of a circumstance you have perhaps forgotten—namely, that some fifteen or six-

teen years ago the Marquis d'Aigrigny, then colonel of the hussars in garrison at Abbeville, spent some time in this house."

"Oh, sir! what a dashing officer was there! It was only just now that I was talking about him to my wife. He was the life of the house!—how well he could perform plays—particularly the character of a scapegrace. In the 'Two Edmonds,' for instance, he would make you die with laughing, in that part of a drunken soldier—and then, with what a charming voice he sung 'Joconde,' sir—better than they could sing it at Paris!"

Rodin, having listened complacently to the bailiff, said to him: "You doubtless know that, after a fierce duel he had with a furious Bonapartist, one General Simon, the Marquis d'Aigrigny (whose private secretary I have now the honor to be) left the world for the church."

"No, sir! is it possible? That fine officer!"

"That fine officer—brave, noble, rich, esteemed, and flattered—abandoned all those advantages for the sorry black gown; and, notwithstanding his name, position, high connections, his reputation as a great preacher, he is still what he was fourteen years ago—a plain *abbé*—while so many, who have neither his

merit nor his virtues, are archbishops and cardinals."

M. Rodin expressed himself with so much goodness, with such an air of conviction, and the facts he cited appeared to be so incontestable, that M. Dupont could not help exclaiming: "Well, sir, that is splendid conduct!"

"Splendid? Oh, no!" said M. Rodin with an inimitable expression of simplicity; "it is quite a matter of course—when one has a heart like M. d'Aigrigny's. But among all his good qualities, he has particularly that of never forgetting worthy people—people of integrity, honor, conscience—and therefore, my dear M. Dupont, he has not forgotten you."

"What, the most noble marquis deigns to remember—"

"Three days ago I received a letter from him in which he mentions your name."

"Is he then at Paris?"

"He will be there soon, if not there now. He went to Italy about three months ago, and, during his absence, he received a very sad piece of news—the death of his mother, who was passing the autumn on one of the estates of the Princess de Saint-Dizier."

"Oh, indeed! I was not aware of it."

“ Yes, it was a cruel grief to him ; but we must all resign ourselves to the will of Providence ! ”

“ And with regard to what subject did the marquis do me the honor to mention my name ? ”

“ I am going to tell you. First of all, you must know that this house is sold. The bill of sale was signed the day before my departure from Paris. ”

“ Oh, sir ! that renews all my uneasiness. ”

“ Pray, why ? ”

“ I am afraid that the new proprietors may not choose to keep me as their bailiff. ”

“ Now see what a lucky chance. It is just on that subject that I am going to speak to you. ”

“ Is it possible ! ”

“ Certainly. Knowing the interest which the marquis feels for you, I am particularly desirous that you should keep this place, and I will do all in my power to serve you, if — ”

“ Ah, sir ! ” cried Dupont, interrupting Rodin ; “ what gratitude do I not owe you ! It is heaven that sends you to me ! ”

“ Now, my dear sir, you flatter me in your turn ; but I ought to tell you that I am obliged to annex a small condition to my support. ”

"Oh, by all means ! Only name it, sir—name it !"

"The person who is about to inhabit this mansion is an old lady in every way worthy of veneration ; Madame de la Sainte-Colombe is the name of this respectable—"

"What, sir ?" said the bailiff, interrupting Rodin ; "Madame de la Sainte-Colombe the lady who has bought us out ?"

"Do you know her ?"

"Yes, sir, she came last week to see the estate. My wife persists that she is a great lady ; but—between ourselves—judging by certain words that I heard her speak—"

"You are full of penetration, my dear M. Dupont. Madame de la Saint-Colombe is far from being a great lady. I believe she was neither more nor less than a milliner, under one of the wooden porticoes of the Palais Royal. You see that I deal openly with you."

"And she boasted of all the noblemen, French and foreign, who used to visit her !"

"No doubt, they came to buy bonnets for their wives ! However, the fact is, that, having gained a large fortune—and, after being in youth and middle age, in-

different to the salvation of her soul—Madame de la Sainte-Colombe is now in a likely way to experience grace—which renders her, as I told you, worthy of veneration, because nothing is so respectable as a sincere repentance—always providing it be lasting. Now to make the good work sure and effectual, we shall need your assistance, my dear M. Dupont.”

“Mine, sir! what can I do in it?”

“A great deal; and I will explain to you how. There is no church in this village, which stands at an equal distance from each of two parishes. Madame de la Sainte-Colombe, wishing to make choice of one of the two clergymen, will naturally apply to you and Madame Dupont, who have long lived in these parts, for information respecting them.”

“Oh! in that case, the choice will soon be made. The incumbent of Danicourt is one of the best of men.”

“Now that is precisely what you must not say to Madame de la Saint-Colombe.”

“How so?”

“You must, on the contrary, much praise, without ceasing, the curate of Roiville, the other parish, so as to decide this good lady to trust herself to his care.”

“And why, sir, to him rather than to the other?”

“Why?—because if you and Madame Dupont succeed in persuading Madame de la Sainte-Colombe to make the choice I wish, you will be certain to keep your place as bailiff. I give you my word of it, and what I promise I perform.”

“I do not doubt, sir, that you have this power,” said Dupont, convinced by Rodin’s manner and the authority of his words; “but I should like to know—”

“One word more,” said Rodin, interrupting him; “I will deal openly with you, and tell you why I insist on the preference which I beg you to support. I should be grieved if you saw in all this the shadow of an intrigue. It is only for the purpose of doing a good action. The curate of Roiville, for whom I ask your influence, is a man for whom M. d’Aigrigny feels a deep interest. Though very poor, he has to support an aged mother. Now, if he had the spiritual care of Madame de la Sainte-Colombe, he would do more good than any one else, because he is full of zeal and patience; and then it is clear he would reap some little advantages, by which his old mother might profit—there you see is the secret of this mighty scheme. When I knew that this lady was disposed to buy an estate in the neighborhood of our friend’s

parish, I wrote about it to the marquis; and he, remembering you, desired me to ask you to render him this small service, which, as you see, will not remain without a recompense. For I tell you once more, and I will prove it, that I have the power to keep you in your place as bailiff."

"Well, sir," replied Dupont, after a moment's reflection, "you are so frank and obliging that I will imitate your sincerity. In the same degree that the curate of Danicourt is respected and loved in this country, the curate of Roiville, whom you wish me to prefer to him, is dreaded for his intolerance—and, moreover—"

"Well, and what more?"

"Why, then, they say—"

"Come, what do they say?"

"They say—he is a Jesuit."

Upon these words M. Rodin burst into so hearty a laugh that the bailiff was quite struck dumb with amazement—for the countenance of M. Rodin took a singular expression when he laughed. "A Jesuit!" he repeated, with redoubled hilarity; "a Jesuit! Now really, my dear M. Dupont, for a man of sense, experience and intelligence, how can you believe such idle stories? A Jesuit—are there such people as Jesuits?—in our

time, above all, can you believe such romance of the Jacobins, hobgoblins of the old freedom lovers? Come, come; I wager you have read about them in the *Constitutionnel*!”

“And yet, sir, they say—”

“Good heavens! what will they not say? But wise men, prudent men like you do not meddle with what is said—they manage their own little matters, without doing injury to any one, and they never sacrifice, for the sake of nonsense, a good place, which secures them a comfortable provision for the rest of their days. I tell you frankly, however much I may regret it, that should you not succeed in getting the preference for my man, you will not remain bailiff here.”

“But, sir,” said poor Dupont, “it will not be my fault if this lady, hearing a great deal in praise of the other curate, should prefer him to your friend.”

“Ah! but if, on the other hand, persons who have long lived in the neighborhood—persons worthy of confidence, whom she will see every day—tell Madame de la Sainte-Colombe a great deal of good of my friend, and a great deal of harm of the other curate, she will prefer the former, and you will continue bailiff.”

“But, sir—that would be calumny!” cried Dupont.

“Pshaw, my dear M. Dupont!” said Rodin, with an air of sorrowful and affectionate reproach, “how can you think me capable of giving you evil counsel? I was only making a supposition. You wish to remain bailiff on this estate. I offer you the certainty of doing so—it is for you to consider and decide.”

“But, sir—”

“One word more—or rather one more condition—as important as the other. Unfortunately, we have seen clergymen take advantage of the age and weakness of their penitents, unfairly to benefit either themselves or others: I believe our *protégé* incapable of any such baseness—but, in order to discharge my responsibility—and yours, also, as you will have contributed to his appointment—I must request that you will write to me twice a week, giving the most exact detail of all that you have remarked in the character, habits, connections, pursuits, of Madame de la Sainte-Colombe—for the influence of a confessor, you see, reveals itself in the whole conduct of life, and I should wish to be fully edified by the proceedings of my friend, without his being aware of it—or, if anything blamable were to strike

you, I should be immediately informed of it by this weekly correspondence."

"But, sir—that would be to act as a spy?" exclaimed the unfortunate bailiff.

"Now, my dear M. Dupont! how can you thus brand the sweetest, most wholesome of human desires—mutual confidence? I ask of you nothing else—I ask of you to write to me confidentially the details of all that goes on here. On these two conditions, inseparable one from the other, you remain bailiff; otherwise, I shall be forced, with grief and regret, to recommend some one else to Madame de la Sainte-Colombe."

"I beg you, sir," said Dupont, with emotion, "be generous without any conditions! I and my wife have only this place to give us bread, and we are too old to find another. Do not expose our probity of forty years' standing to be tempted by the fear of want, which is so bad a counselor!"

"My dear M. Dupont, you are really a great child: you must reflect upon this, and give me your answer in the course of a week."

"Oh, sir, I implore you—" The conversation was here interrupted by a loud report, which was almost instantaneously repeated by the echoes of the cliffs.

“What is that?” said M. Rodin. Hardly had he spoken when the same noise was again heard, more distinctly than before.

“It is the sound of cannon,” cried Dupont, rising; “no doubt a ship in distress, or signaling for a pilot.”

“My dear,” said the bailiff’s wife, entering abruptly, “from the terrace we can see a steamer and a large ship nearly dismasted—they are drifting right upon the shore—the ship is firing minute guns—it will be lost.”

“Oh, it is terrible!” cried the bailiff, taking his hat and preparing to go out, “to look on at a shipwreck, and be able to do nothing.”

“Can no help be given to these vessels?” asked M. Rodin.

“If they are driven upon the reefs, no human power can save them; since the last equinox two ships have been lost on this coast.”

“Lost with all on board?—Oh, very frightful,” said M. Rodin.

“In such a storm there is but little chance for the crew; no matter,” said the bailiff, addressing his wife, “I’ll run down to the rocks with the people of the farm, and try to save some of them, poor creatures!—Light large fires in several rooms—get ready linen, clothes, cordials

—I scarcely dare hope to save any, but we must do our best. Will you come with me, M. Rodin ? ”

“ I should think it a duty, if I could be at all useful, but I am too old and feeble to be of any service,” said M. Rodin, who was by no means anxious to encounter the storm. “ Your good lady will be kind enough to show me the Green Chamber, and when I have found the articles I require, I will set out immediately for Paris, for I am in great haste.”

“ Very well, sir. Catherine will show you. Ring the big bell,” said the bailiff to his servant: “ let all the people of the farm meet me at the foot of the cliff, with ropes and levers.”

“ Yes, my dear,” replied Catherine; “ but do not expose yourself.”

“ Kiss me—it will bring me luck,” said the bailiff; and he started at a full run, crying, “ Quick, quick; by this time, not a plank may remain of the vessels.”

“ My dear madam,” said Rodin, always impassable, “ will you be obliging enough to show me the Green Chamber ? ”

“ Please to follow me, sir,” answered Catherine, drying her tears—for she trembled on account of her husband, whose courage she well knew.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE TEMPEST.

THE sea is raging. Mountainous waves of dark green, marbled with white foam, stand out, in high, deep undulations, from the broad streak of red light which extends along the horizon. Above are piled heavy masses of black and sulphurous vapor, while a few lighter clouds of a reddish gray, driven by the violence of the wind, rush across the murky sky.

The pale winter sun, before he quite disappears in the great clouds, behind which he is slowly mounting, casts here and there some oblique rays upon the troubled sea, and gilds the transparent crest of some of the tallest waves. A band of show-white foam boils and rages as far as the eye can reach along the line of the reefs that bristle on this dangerous coast.

Half-way up a rugged promontory, which juts pretty far into the sea, rises Cardoville Castle; a ray of the sun glitters upon its windows; its brick walls and pointed roofs of slate are visible in the midst of this sky loaded with vapors.

A large, disabled ship, with mere shreds of sail still fluttering from the stumps of broken masts, drives dead upon the coast. Now she rolls her monstrous hull upon the waves—now plunges into their trough. A flash is seen, followed by a dull sound, scarcely perceptible in the midst of the roar of the tempest. That gun is the last signal of distress from this lost vessel, which is fast forging on the breakers.

At the same moment, a steamer with its long plume of black smoke is working her way from east to west, making every effort to keep at a distance from the shore, leaving the breakers on her left. The dismantled ship, drifting toward the rocks, at the mercy of the wind and tide, must some time pass right ahead of the steamer.

Suddenly, the rush of a heavy sea laid the steamer upon her side; the enormous wave broke furiously on her deck; in a second, the chimney was carried away, the paddle-box stove in, one of the wheels rendered useless. A second white-cap, following the first, again struck the vessel amidships, and so increased the damage that, no longer answering to the helm, she also drifted toward the shore, in the same direction as the ship. But the latter, though further from the breakers, presented a greater surface to the wind

and sea, and so gained upon the steamer in swiftness that a collision between the two vessels became imminent—a new danger added to all the horrors of the now certain wreck.

The ship was an English vessel, the *Black Eagle*, homeward bound from Alexandria, with passengers, who, arriving from India and Java, *via* the Red Sea, had disembarked at the Isthmus of Suez, from on board the steamship *Ruyter*. The *Black Eagle*, quitting the Straits of Gibraltar, had gone to touch at the Azores. She headed thence for Portsmouth, when she was overtaken in the Channel by the northwester. The steamer was the *William Tell*, coming from Germany, by way of the Elbe, and bound, in the last place, from Hamburg to Havre.

These two vessels, the sport of enormous rollers, driven along by tide and tempest, were now rushing upon the breakers with frightful speed. The deck of each offered a terrible spectacle; the loss of crew and passengers appeared almost certain, for before them a tremendous sea broke on jagged rocks, at the foot of a perpendicular cliff.

The captain of the *Black Eagle*, standing on the poop, holding by the rem-

nant of a spar, issued his last orders in this fearful extremity with courageous coolness. The smaller boats had been carried away by the waves; it was in vain to think of launching the long-boat; the only chance of escape, in case the ship should not be immediately dashed to pieces on touching the rocks, was to establish a communication with the land by means of a life line—almost the last resort for passing between the shore and a stranded vessel.

The deck was covered with passengers, whose cries and terror augmented the general confusion. Some, struck with a kind of stupor, and clinging convulsively to the shrouds, awaited their doom in a state of stupid insensibility. Others wrung their hands in despair, or rolled upon the deck uttering horrible imprecations. Here, women knelt down to pray; there, others hid their faces in their hands, that they might not see the awful approach of death. A young mother, pale as a specter, holding her child clasped tightly to her bosom, went supplicating from sailor to sailor, and offering a purse full of gold and jewels to any one that would take charge of her son.

These cries, and tears, and terror contrasted with the stern and silent resigna-

tion of the sailors. Knowing the imminence of the inevitable danger, some of them stripped themselves of part of their clothes, waiting for the moment to make a last effort, to dispute their lives with the fury of the waves ; others, renouncing all hope, prepared to meet death with stocial indifference.

Here and there, touching or awful episodes rose in relief, if one may so express it, from this dark and gloomy background of despair.

A young man of about eighteen or twenty, with shiny black hair, copper-colored complexion, and perfectly regular and handsome features, contemplated this scene of dismay and horror with that sad calmness peculiar to those who have often braved great perils ; wrapped in a cloak, he leaned his back against the bulwarks, with his feet resting against one of the bulkheads. Suddenly, the unhappy mother, who, with her child in her arms, and gold in her hand, had in vain addressed herself to several of the mariners, to beg them to save her boy, perceiving the young man with the copper-colored complexion, threw herself on her knees before him, and lifted her child toward him with a burst of inexpressible agony. The young man took it, mournfully shook

his head, and pointed to the furious waves—but, with a meaning gesture, he appeared to promise that he would at least try to save it. Then the young mother, in a mad transport of joy, seized the hand of the youth, and bathed it with her tears.

Further on, another passenger of the *Black Eagle* seemed animated by sentiments of the most active pity. One would hardly have given him five-and-twenty years of age. His long, fair locks fell in curls on either side of his angelic countenance. He wore a black cassock and white neck-band. Applying himself to comfort the most desponding, he went from one to the other, and spoke to them pious words of hope and resignation; to hear him console some, and encourage others, in language full of unction, tenderness, and ineffable charity, one would have supposed him unaware of or indifferent to the perils that he shared.

On his fine, mild features was impressed a calm and sacred intrepidity, a religious abstraction from every terrestrial thought; from time to time, he raised to heaven his large blue eyes, beaming with gratitude, love, and serenity, as if to thank God for having called him to one of those formidable trials in which the man of humanity and courage may devote himself

for his brethren, and, if not able to rescue them all, at least die with them, pointing to the sky. One might almost have taken him for an angel, sent down to render less cruel the strokes of inexorable fate.

Strange contrast ! not far from this young man's angelic beauty there was another being, who resembled an evil spirit !

Boldly mounted on what was left of the bowsprit, to which he held on by means of some remaining cordage, this man looked down upon the terrible scene that was passing on the deck. A grim, wild joy lighted up his countenance of a dead yellow, that tint peculiar to those who spring from the union of the white race with the East. He wore only a shirt and linen drawers ; from his neck was suspended, by a cord, a cylindrical tin box, similar to that in which soldiers carry their leave of absence.

The more the danger augmented, the nearer the ship came to the breakers, or to a collision with the steamer, which she was now rapidly approaching—a terrible collision which would probably cause the two vessels to founder before even they touched the rocks—the more did the infernal joy of this passenger reveal itself in frightful transports. He seemed to long

with ferocious impatience for the moment when the work of destruction should be accomplished. To see him thus feasting with avidity on all the agony, the terror, and the despair of those around him, one might have taken him for the apostle of one of those sanguinary deities, who, in barbarous countries, preside over murder and carnage.

By this time the *Black Eagle*, driven by the wind and waves, came so near the *William Tell* that the passengers on the deck of the nearly dismantled steamer were visible from the first-named vessel.

These passengers were no longer numerous. The heavy sea, which stove in the paddle-box and broke one of the paddles, had also carried away nearly the whole of the bulwarks on that side; the waves, entering every instant by this large opening, swept the decks with irresistible violence, and every time bore away with them some fresh victims.

Among the passengers, who seemed only to have escaped this danger to be hurled against the rocks, or crushed in the encounter of the two vessels, one group was especially worthy of the most tender and painful interest. Taking refuge abaft, a tall old man, with bald forehead and gray mustache, had lashed himself to a

stanchion, by winding a piece of rope round his body, while he clasped in his arms and held fast to his breast two girls of fifteen or sixteen, half-enveloped in a pelisse of reindeer-skin. A large, fallow Siberian dog, dripping with water, and barking furiously at the waves, stood close to their feet.

These girls, clasped in the arms of the old man, also pressed close to each other ; but, far from being lost in terror, they raised their eyes to heaven, full of confidence and ingenuous hope, as though they expected to be saved by the intervention of some supernatural power.

A frightful shriek of horror and despair, raised by the passengers of both the vessels, was heard suddenly above the roar of the tempest. At the moment when, plunging deeply between two waves, the broadside of the steamer was turned toward the bows of the ship, the latter, lifted to a prodigious height on a mountain of water, remained, as it were, suspended over the *William Tell*, during the second which preceded the shock of the two vessels.

There are sights of so sublime a horror that it is impossible to describe them. Yet, in the midst of these catastrophes, swift as thought, one catches sometimes

a momentary glimpse of a picture, rapid and fleeting, as if illumined by a flash of lightning.

Thus, when the *Black Eagle*, poised aloft by the flood, was about to crash down upon the *William Tell*, the young man with the angelic countenance and fair, waving locks bent over the prow of the ship, ready to cast himself into the sea to save some victim. Suddenly, he perceived on board the steamer, on which he looked down from the summit of the immense wave, the two girls extending their arms toward him in supplication. They appeared to recognize him, and gazed on him with a sort of ecstasy and religious homage !

For a second, in spite of the horrors of the tempest, in spite of the approaching shipwreck, the looks of those three beings met. The features of the young man were expressive of sudden and profound pity ; for the maidens, with their hands clasped in prayer, seemed to invoke him as their expected Saviour. The old man, struck down by the fall of a plank, lay helpless on the deck. Soon all disappeared together.

A fearful mass of water dashed the *Black Eagle* down upon the *William Tell*, in the midst of a cloud of boiling

foam. To the dreadful crash of the two great bodies of wood and iron, which, splintering against one another, instantly foundered, one loud cry was added—a cry of agony and death—the cry of a hundred human creatures swallowed up at once by the waves !

And then—nothing more was visible !

A few moments after, the fragments of the two vessels appeared in the trough of the sea, and on the caps of the waves—with here and there the contracted arms, the livid and despairing faces of some unhappy wretches, striving to make their way to the reefs along the shore, at the risk of being crushed to death by the shock of the furious breakers.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE SHIPWRECKED.

WHILE the bailiff was gone to the sea-shore, to render help to those of the passengers who might escape from the inevitable shipwreck, M. Rodin, conducted by Catherine to the Green Chamber, had there found the articles that he was to take with him to Paris.

After passing two hours in this apartment, very indifferent to the fate of the shipwrecked persons, which alone ab-

sorbed the attention of the inhabitants of the Castle, Rodin returned to the chamber commonly occupied by the bailiff, a room which opened upon a long gallery. When he entered it he found nobody there. Under his arm he held a casket, with silver fastenings, almost black from age, while one end of a large red morocco portfolio projected from the breast-pocket of his half-buttoned great-coat.

Had the cold and livid countenance of the Abbé d'Aigrigny's secretary been able to express joy otherwise than by a sarcastic smile, his features would have been radiant with delight ; for, just then, he was under the influence of the most agreeable thoughts. Having placed the casket upon a table, it was with marked satisfaction that he thus communed with himself :

“All goes well. It was prudent to keep these papers here till this moment, for one must always be on guard against the diabolical spirit of that Adrienne de Cardoville, who appears to guess instinctively what it is impossible she should know. Fortunately, the time approaches when we shall have no more need to fear her. Her fate will be a cruel one ; it must be so. Those proud, independent characters are at all times our natural

enemies—they are so by their very essence—how much more when they show themselves peculiarly hurtful and dangerous ! As for La Sainte Colombe, the bailiff is sure to act for us ; between what the fool calls his conscience, and the dread of being at his age deprived of a livelihood, he will not hesitate. I wish to have him because he will serve us better than a stranger ; his having been here twenty years will prevent all suspicion on the part of that dull and narrow-minded woman. Once in the hands of our man at Roiville, I will answer for the result. The course of all such gross and stupid women is traced beforehand : in their youth, they serve the devil ; in riper years, they make others serve him ; in their old age, they are horribly afraid of him ; and this fear must continue till she has left us the Château de Cardoville, which, from its isolated position, will make us an excellent college. All then goes well. As for the affair of the medals, the 13th of February approaches without news from Joshua—evidently, Prince Djalma is still kept prisoner by the English in the heart of India, or I must have received letters from Batavia. The daughters of General Simon will be detained at Leipsic for at least a month longer. All our foreign re-

lations are in the best condition. As for our internal affairs—”

Here M. Rodin was interrupted in the current of his reflections by the entrance of Madame Dupont, who was zealously engaged in preparations to give assistance in case of need.

“Now,” said she to a servant, “light a fire in the next room ; put this warm wine there : your master may be in every minute.”

“Well, my dear madam,” said Rodin to her, “do they hope to save any of these poor creatures ?”

“Alas ! I do not know, sir. My husband has been gone nearly two hours. I am terribly uneasy on his account. He is so courageous, so imprudent, if once he thinks he can be of any service.”

“Courageous even to imprudence,” said Rodin to himself, impatiently ; “I do not like that.”

“Well,” resumed Catherine, “I have here at hand my hot linen, my cordials—heaven grant it may all be of use !”

“We may at least hope so, my dear madam. I very much regretted that my age and weakness did not permit me to assist your excellent husband. I also regret not being able to wait for the issue of his exertions, and to wish him joy if

successful—for I am unfortunately compelled to depart—my moments are precious. I shall be much obliged if you will have the carriage got ready.”

“Yes, sir; I will see about it directly.”

“One word, my dear, good Madame Dupont. You are a woman of sense and excellent judgment. Now I have put your husband in the way to keep, if he will, his situation as bailiff of the estate—”

“Is it possible? What gratitude do we not owe you! Without this place what would become of us at our time of life?”

“I have only saddled my promise with two conditions—mere trifles—he will explain all that to you.”

“Ah, sir! we shall regard you as our deliverer.”

“You are too good. Only, on two little conditions—”

“If there were a hundred, sir, we should gladly accept them. Think what we should be without this place—penniless—absolutely penniless!”

“I reckon upon you then; for the interest of your husband, you will try to persuade him.”

“Missus! I say, missus! here’s master come back,” cried a servant, rushing into the chamber.

"Has he many with him?"

"No, missus; he is alone."

"Alone! alone?"

"Quite alone, missus."

A few moments after, M. Dupont entered the room; his clothes were streaming with water; to keep his hat on in the midst of the storm, he had tied it down to his head by means of his cravat, which was knotted under his chin; his gaiters were covered with chalky stains.

"There, I have thee, my dear love!" cried his wife, tenderly embracing him. "I have been so uneasy!"

"Up to the present moment—THREE SAVED."

"God be praised, my dear M. Dupont!" said Rodin; "at least your efforts will not have been all in vain."

"Three! only three?" said Catherine. "Gracious Heaven!"

"I only speak of those I saw myself, near the little creek of Goëlands. Let us hope there may be more saved on other parts of the coast."

"Yes, indeed; happily, the shore is not equally steep in all parts."

"And where are these interesting sufferers, my dear sir?" asked Rodin, who could not avoid remaining a few instants longer.

"They are mounting the cliffs, supported by our people. As they cannot walk very fast, I ran on before to console my wife, and to take the necessary measures for their reception. First of all, my dear, you must get ready some women's clothes."

"There is then a woman among the persons saved?"

"There are two girls—fifteen or sixteen years of age at the most—mere children—and so pretty!"

"Poor little things!" said Rodin, with an affectation of interest.

"The person to whom they owe their lives is with them. He is a real hero!"

"A hero?"

"Yes; only fancy—"

"You can tell me all this by and by. Just slip on this dry, warm dressing-gown, and take some of this hot wine. You are wet through."

"I'll not refuse, for I am almost frozen to death. I was telling you that the person who saved these young girls was a hero; and certainly his courage was beyond anything one could have imagined. When I left here with the men of the farm, we descended the little winding path, and arrived at the foot of the cliff—near the little creek of Goëlands, fort-

unately somewhat sheltered from the waves by five or six enormous masses of rock stretching out into the sea. Well, what should we find there? Why, the two young girls I spoke of, in a swoon, with their feet still in the water, and their bodies resting against a rock, as though they had been placed there by some one, after being withdrawn from the sea."

"Dear children! it is quite touching!" said M. Rodin, raising, as usual, the tip of his little finger to the corner of his right eye, as though to dry a tear, which was very seldom visible.

"What struck me was their great resemblance to each other," resumed the bailiff; "only one in the habit of seeing them could tell the difference."

"Twin-sisters, no doubt," said Madame Dupont.

"One of the poor things," continued the bailiff, "held between her clasped hands a little bronze medal, which was suspended from her neck by a chain of the same material."

Rodin generally maintained a very stooping posture; but, at these last words of the bailiff, he drew himself up suddenly, while a faint color spread itself over his livid cheeks. In any other person,

these symptoms would have appeared of little consequence; but in Rodin, accustomed for long years to control and dissimulate his emotions, they announced no ordinary excitement. Approaching the bailiff, he said to him in a slightly agitated voice, but still with an air of indifference: "It was doubtless a pious relic. Did you see what was inscribed on this medal?"

"No, sir; I did not think of it."

"And the two young girls were like one another—very much like, you say?"

"So like, that one would hardly know which was which. Probably they are orphans, for they are dressed in mourning."

"Oh! dressed in mourning?" said M. Rodin, with another start.

"Alas! orphans so young!" said Madame Dupont, wiping her eyes.

"As they had fainted away, we carried them further on to a place where the sand was quite dry. While we were busy about this, we saw the head of a man appear from behind one of the rocks, which he was trying to climb, clinging to it by one hand; we ran to him, and luckily in the nick of time, for he was clean worn out, and fell exhausted into the arms of our men. It was of him I spoke, when I

talked of a hero; for, not content with having saved the two young girls by his admirable courage, he had attempted to rescue a third person, and had actually gone back among the rocks and breakers—but his strength failed him, and, without the aid of our men, he would certainly have been washed away from the ridge to which he clung.”

“He must indeed be a fine fellow!” said Catherine.

Rodin, with his head bowed upon his breast, seemed quite indifferent to this conversation. The dismay and stupor, in which he had been plunged, only increased upon reflection. The two girls, who had just been saved, were fifteen years of age; were dressed in mourning; were so alike that one might be taken for the other; one of them wore round her neck a chain with a bronze medal; he could scarcely doubt that they were the daughters of General Simon. But how could those sisters be among the number of shipwrecked passengers? How could they have escaped from the prison at Leipsic? How did it happen that he had not been informed of it? Could they have fled, or had they been set at liberty? How was it possible that he

should not be apprised of such an event? But these secondary thoughts, which offered themselves in crowds to the mind of M. Rodin, were swallowed up in the one fact: "The daughters of General Simon are here!" His plan, so laboriously laid, was thus entirely destroyed.

"When I speak of the deliverer of these young girls," resumed the bailiff, addressing his wife, and without remarking M. Rodin's absence of mind, "you are expecting no doubt to see a Hercules?—well, he is altogether the reverse. He is almost a boy in look, with fair, sweet face, and light, curling locks. I left him a cloak to cover him, for he had nothing on but his shirt, black knee-breeches, and a pair of black worsted stockings—which struck me as singular."

"Why, it was certainly not a sailor's dress."

"Besides, though the ship was English, I believe my hero is a Frenchman, for he speaks our language as well as we do. What brought the tears to my eyes, was to see the young girls, when they came to themselves. As soon as they saw him, they threw themselves at his feet, and seemed to look up to him and thank him, as one would pray. Then they cast their

eyes around them, as if in search of some other person, and, having exchanged a few words, they fell sobbing into each other's arms."

"What a dreadful thing it is! How many poor creatures must have perished!"

"When we quitted the rocks, the sea had already cast ashore seven dead bodies, besides fragments of the wreck, and packages. I spoke to some of the coast-guard, and they will remain all day on the look-out; and if, as I hope, any more should escape with life, they are to be brought here. But surely that is the sound of voices!—yes, it is our shipwrecked guests!"

The bailiff and his wife ran to the door of the room—that door, which opened on the long gallery—while Rodin, biting convulsively his flat nails, awaited with angry impatience the arrival of the strangers. A touching picture soon presented itself to his view.

From the end of the darksome gallery, only lighted on one side by several windows, three persons, conducted by a peasant, advanced slowly. This group consisted of the two maidens, and the intrepid young man to whom they owed their lives. Rose and Blanche were on either side of their deliverer, who, walking with great

difficulty, supported himself lightly on their arms.

Though he was full twenty-five years of age, the juvenile countenance of this man made him appear much younger. His long, fair hair, parted on the forehead, streamed wet and smooth over the collar of a large brown cloak, with which he had been covered. It would be difficult to describe the adorable expression of goodness in his pale, mild face, as pure as the most ideal creations of Raphael's pencil—for that divine artist alone could have caught the melancholy grace of those exquisite features, the serenity of that celestial look, from eyes limpid and blue as those of an archangel, or of a martyr ascended to the skies.

Yes, of a martyr! for a blood-red halo already encircled that beauteous head. Piteous sight to see! just above his light eyebrows, and rendered still more visible by the effect of the cold, a narrow cicatrix from a wound inflicted many months before, appeared to encompass his fair forehead with a purple band; and (still more sad!) his hands had been cruelly pierced by a crucifixion—his feet had suffered the same injury—and, if he now walked with so much difficulty, it was that his wounds

had reopened, as he struggled over the sharp rocks.

This young man was Gabriel, the priest attached to the foreign mission, the adopted son of Dagobert's wife. He was a priest and martyr—for, in our days, there are still martyrs, as in the time when the Cæsars flung the early Christians to the lions and tigers of the circus.

Yes, in our days, the children of the people—for it is almost always among them that heroic and disinterested devotion may still be found—the children of the people, led by an honorable conviction, because it is courageous and sincere, go to all parts of the world, to try and propagate their faith, and brave both torture and death with the most unpretending valor.

How many of them, victims of some barbarous tribe, have perished, obscure and unknown, in the midst of the solitudes of the two worlds!—And for these humble soldiers of the cross, who have nothing but their faith and their intrepidity, there are never reserved on their return (and they seldom do return) the rich and sumptuous dignities of the Church. Never does the purple or the miter conceal their scarred brows and mutilated limbs; like the great

majority of other soldiers, they die forgotten.*

In their ingenuous gratitude, the daughters of General Simon, as soon as they recovered their senses after the shipwreck, and felt themselves able to ascend the cliffs, would not leave to any other person the care of sustaining the faltering steps of him who had rescued them from certain death.

The black garments of Rose and Blanche streamed with water; their faces were deadly pale, and expressive of deep grief; the marks of recent tears were on their cheeks, and, with sad, downcast eyes, they trembled both from agitation and cold, as the agonizing thought recurred to them, that they should never again see Dagobert, their friend and guide; for it

*We always remember with emotion the end of a letter written, two or three years ago, by one of these young and valiant missionaries, the son of poor parents in Beauce. He was writing to his mother from the heart of Japan, and thus concluded his letter: "Adieu, my dear mother! they say there is much danger where I am now sent to. Pray for me, and tell all our good neighbors that I think of them very often."—These few words, addressed from the center of Asia to poor peasants in a hamlet of France, are only the more touching from their very simplicity.—E. S.

was to him that Gabriel had stretched forth a helping hand, to assist him to climb the rocks. Unfortunately, the strength of both had failed, and the soldier had been carried away by a retreating wave.

The sight of Gabriel was a fresh surprise for Rodin, who had retired on one side, in order to observe all; but this surprise was of so pleasant a nature, and he felt so much joy in beholding the missionary safe after such imminent peril, that the painful impression, caused by the view of General Simon's daughters, was a little softened. It must not be forgotten that the presence of Gabriel in Paris, on the 13th of February, was essential to the success of Rodin's projects.

The bailiff and his wife, who were greatly moved at sight of the orphans, approached them with eagerness. Just then a farm-boy entered the room, crying: "Sir! sir! good news—two more saved from the wreck!"

"Blessing and praise to God for it!" said the missionary.

"Where are they?" asked the bailiff, hastening toward the door.

"There is one who can walk, and is following behind me with Justin; the other

was wounded against the rocks, and they are carrying him on a litter made of branches."

"I will run and have him placed in the room below," said the bailiff, as he went out. "Catherine, you can look to the young ladies."

"And the shipwrecked man who can walk—where is he?" asked the bailiff's wife.

"Here he is," said the peasant, pointing to some one who came rapidly along the gallery; "when he heard that the two young ladies were safe in the chateau—though he is old, and wounded in the head, he took such great strides, that it was all I could do to get here before him."

Hardly had the peasant pronounced these words, when Rose and Blanche, springing up by a common impulse, flew to the door. They arrived there at the same moment as Dagobert.

The soldier, unable to utter a syllable, fell on his knees at the threshold, and extended his arms to the daughters of General Simon; while Spoilsport, running to them, licked their hands.

But the emotion was too much for Dagobert; and, when he had clasped the orphans in his arms, his head fell back-

ward, and he would have sunk down altogether, but for the care of the peasants. In spite of the observations of the bailiff's wife, on their state of weakness and agitation, the two young girls insisted on accompanying Dagobert, who was carried fainting into an adjoining apartment.

At sight of the soldier, Rodin's face was again violently contracted, for he had till then believed that the guide of General Simon's daughters was dead. The missionary, worn out with fatigue, was leaning upon a chair, and had not yet perceived Rodin.

A new personage, a man with a dead yellow complexion, now entered the room, accompanied by another peasant, who pointed out Gabriel to him. This man, who had just borrowed a smock-frock and a pair of trousers, approached the missionary, and said to him in French, but with a foreign accent: "Prince Djalma has just been brought in here. His first word was to ask for you."

"What does that man say?" cried Rodin, in a voice of thunder; for at the name of Djalma, he had sprung with one bound to Gabriel's side.

"M. Rodin!" exclaimed the missionary, falling back in surprise.

"M. Rodin," cried the other shipwrecked person; and, from that moment, he kept his eye fixed on the correspondent of M. Van Dael.

"You here, sir?" said Gabriel, approaching Rodin with an air of deference, not unmixed with fear.

"What did that man say to you?" repeated Rodin, in an excited tone. "Did he not utter the name of Prince Djalma?"

"Yes, sir; Prince Djalma was one of the passengers on board the English ship which came from Alexandria, and in which we have just been wrecked. This vessel touched at the Azores, where I then was; the ship that brought me from Charlestown having been obliged to put in there, and being likely to remain for some time on account of serious damage, I embarked on board the *Black Eagle*, where I met Prince Djalma. We were bound to Portsmouth, and from thence my intention was to proceed to France."

Rodin did not care to interrupt Gabriel. This new shock had completely paralyzed his thoughts. At length, like a man who catches at a last hope, which he knows beforehand to be vain, he said to Gabriel: "Can you tell me who this Prince Djalma is?"

"A young man as good as brave—the son of an East Indian king, dispossessed of his territory by the English."

Then, turning toward the other shipwrecked man, the missionary said to him with anxious interest: "How is the prince? are his wounds dangerous?"

"They are serious contusions, but they will not be mortal," answered the other.

"Heaven be praised!" said the missionary, addressing Rodin; "here, you see, is another saved."

"So much the better," observed Rodin, in a quick, imperious tone.

"I will go see him," said Gabriel, submissively. "You have no orders to give me?"

"Will you be able to leave this place in two or three hours, notwithstanding your fatigues?"

"If it be necessary—yes."

"It is necessary. You will go with me."

Gabriel only bowed in reply, and Rodin sunk confounded into a chair, while the missionary went out with the peasant. The man with the sallow complexion still lingered in a corner of the room, unperceived by Rodin.

This man was Faringhea, the half-

caste, one of the three chiefs of the Stranglers. Having escaped the pursuit of the soldiers in the ruins of Tchandi, he had killed Mahal the Smuggler, and robbed him of the dispatches written by M. Joshua van Dael to Rodin, as also of the letter by which the Smuggler was to have been received as passenger on board the *Ruyter*. When Faringhea left the hut in the ruins of Tchandi, he had not been seen by Djalma; and the latter, when he met him on shipboard, after his escape (which we shall explain by and by), not knowing that he belonged to the sect of Phansegars, treated him during the voyage as a fellow-countryman.

Rodin, with his eye fixed and haggard, his countenance of a livid hue, biting his nails to the quick in silent rage, did not perceive the half-caste, who quietly approached him, and laying his hand familiarly on his shoulder, said to him: "Your name is Rodin?"

"What now?" asked the other, starting, and raising his head abruptly.

"Your name is Rodin?" repeated Faringhea.

"Yes. What do you want?"

"You live in the Rue du Milieu-des-Ursins, Paris?"

"Yes. But, once more, what do you want?"

"Nothing now, brother; hereafter, much!"

And Faringhea, retiring with slow steps, left Rodin alarmed at what had passed; for this man, who scarcely trembled at anything, had quailed before the dark look and grim visage of the Strangler.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE DEPARTURE FOR PARIS.

THE most profound silence reigns throughout Cardoville House. The tempest has lulled by degrees, and nothing is heard from afar but the hoarse murmur of the waves, as they wash heavily the shore.

Dagobert and the orphans have been lodged in warm and comfortable apartments on the first floor of the château. Djalma, too severely hurt to be carried upstairs, has remained in a room below. At the moment of the shipwreck, a weeping mother had placed her child in his arms. He had failed in the attempt to snatch this unfortunate infant from certain death, but his generous devotion had

hampered his movements, and when thrown upon the rocks, he was almost dashed to pieces. Faringhea, who has been able to convince him of his affection, remains to watch over him.

Gabriel, after administering consolation to Djalma, has reascended to the chamber allotted to him; faithful to the promise he made to Rodin, to be ready to set out in two hours, he has not gone to bed; but, having dried his clothes, he has fallen asleep in a large, high-backed armchair, placed in front of a bright coal-fire. His apartment is situated near those occupied by Dagobert and the two sisters.

Spoilspout, probably quite at his ease in so respectable a dwelling, has quitted the door of Rose and Blanche's chamber, to lie down and warm himself at the hearth, by the side of which the missionary is sleeping. There, with his nose resting on his outstretched paws, he enjoys a feeling of perfect comfort and repose, after so many perils by land and sea. We will not venture to affirm that he thinks habitually of poor old Jovial; unless we recognize as a token of remembrance on his part his irresistible propensity to bite all the white horses he has met with, ever since the death of his

venerable companion, though, before, he was the most inoffensive of dogs with regard to horses of every color.

Presently one of the doors of the chamber opened, and the two sisters entered timidly. Awake for some minutes, they had risen and dressed themselves, feeling still some uneasiness with respect to Dago-bert; though the bailiff's wife, after showing them to their room, had returned again to tell them that the village doctor found nothing serious in the hurt of the old soldier, still they hoped to meet some one belonging to the château, of whom they could make further inquiries about him.

The high back of the old-fashioned arm-chair, in which Gabriel was sleeping, completely screened him from view; but the orphans, seeing their canine friend lying quietly at his feet, thought it was Dago-bert reposing there, and hastened toward him on tiptoe. To their great astonishment, they saw Gabriel fast asleep, and stood still in confusion, not daring to advance or recede, for fear of waking him.

The long light hair of the missionary was no longer wet, and now curled naturally round his neck and shoulders; the paleness of his complexion was the more striking, from the contrast afforded by the deep

purple of the damask covering of the arm-chair. His beautiful countenance expressed a profound melancholy, either caused by the influence of some painful dream, or else that he was in the habit of keeping down, when awake, some sad regrets, which revealed themselves without his knowledge when he was sleeping. Notwithstanding this appearance of bitter grief, his features preserved their character of angelic sweetness, and seemed endowed with an inexpressible charm, for nothing is more touching than suffering goodness. The two young girls cast down their eyes, blushed simultaneously, and exchanged anxious glances, as if to point out to each other the slumbering missionary.

"He sleeps, sister," said Rose in a low voice.

"So much the better," replied Blanche, also, in a whisper, making a sign of caution; "we shall now be able to observe him well."

"Yes, for we durst not do so, in coming from the sea hither."

"Look! what a sweet countenance!"

"He is just the same as we saw him in our dreams."

"When he promised he would protect us."

"And he has not failed us."

"But here, at least, he is visible."

"Not as it was in the prison at Leipsic, during that dark night."

"And so—he has again rescued us."

"Without him, we should have perished this morning."

"And yet, sister, it seems to me, that in our dreams his countenance shone with light."

"Yes, you know, it dazzled us to look at him."

"And then he had not so sad a mien."

"That was because he came then from heaven; now he is upon earth."

"But, sister, had he then that bright red scar round his forehead?"

"Oh, no! we should have certainly perceived it."

"And these other marks on his hands?"

"If he has been wounded, how can he be an archangel?"

"Why not, sister? If he received those wounds in preventing evil, or in helping the unfortunate, who, like us, were about to perish?"

"You are right. If he did not run any danger for those he protects, it would be less noble."

"What a pity that he does not open his eyes!"

"Their expression is so good, so tender!"

"Why did he not speak of our mother, by the way?"

"We were not alone with him; he did not like to do so."

"But now we are alone."

"If we were to pray to him to speak to us?"

The orphans looked doubtingly at each other, with charming simplicity; a bright glow suffused their cheeks, and their young bosoms heaved gently beneath their black dresses.

"You are right. Let us kneel down to him."

"Oh, sister! *our* hearts beat so!" said Blanche, believing, rightly, that Rose felt exactly as she did. "And yet it seems to do us good. It is as if some happiness were going to befall us."

The sisters, having approached the arm-chair on tip-toe, knelt down with clasped hands, one to the right, the other to the left of the young priest. It was a charming picture. Turning their lovely faces toward him, they said in a low whisper, with a soft, sweet voice, well suited to their youthful appearance: "Gabriel! speak to us of our mother!"

On this appeal, the missionary gave a

slight start, half-opened his eyes, and, still in a state of semi-consciousness, between sleep and waking, beheld those two beauteous faces turned toward him, and heard two gentle voices repeat his name.

"Who calls me?" said he, rousing himself, and raising his head.

"It is Blanche and Rose."

It was now Gabriel's turn to blush, for he recognized the young girls he had saved. "Rise, my sisters!" said he to them; "you should kneel only unto God."

The orphans obeyed and were soon beside him, holding each other by the hand. "You know my name, it seems," said the missionary, with a smile.

"Oh, we have not forgotten it!"

"Who told it you?"

"Yourself."

"I?"

"Yes—when you came from our mother."

"I, my sisters?" said the missionary, unable to comprehend the words of the orphans. "You are mistaken. I saw you to-day for the first time."

"But in our dreams?"

"Yes—do you not remember?—in our dreams."

"In Germany—three months ago, for the first time. Look at us well."

Gabriel could not help smiling at the simplicity of Rose and Blanche; who expected him to remember a dream of theirs; growing more and more perplexed, he repeated: "In your dreams?"

"Certainly; when you gave us such good advice."

"And when we were so sorrowful in prison, your words, which we remembered, consoled us, and gave us courage."

"Was it not you who delivered us from the prison at Leipsic, in that dark night, when we were not able to see you?"

"I!"

"What other but you would thus have come to our help, and to that of our old friend?"

"We told him that you would love him because he loved us, although he would not believe in angels."

"And this morning, during the tempest, we had hardly any fear."

"Because we expected you."

"This morning — yes, my sisters — it pleased Heaven to send me to your assistance. I was coming from America, but I have never been in Leipsic. I could not, therefore, have let you out of prison. Tell me, my sisters," added he, with a benevolent smile, "for whom do you take me?"

“For a good angel, whom we have seen already in dreams, sent by our mother from heaven to protect us.”

“My dear sisters, I am only a poor priest. It is by mere chance, no doubt, that I bear some resemblance to the angel you have seen in your dreams, and whom you could not see in any other manner—for angels are not visible to mortal eye.”

“Angels are not visible?” said the orphans, looking sorrowfully at each other.

“No matter, my dear sisters,” said Gabriel, taking them affectionately by the hand; “dreams, like everything else, come from above. Since the remembrance of your mother was mixed up with this dream, it is twice blessed.”

At this moment a door opened, and Dagobert made his appearance. Up to this time, the orphans, in their innocent ambition to be protected by an archangel, had quite forgotten the circumstance that Dagobert’s wife had adopted a forsaken child, who was called Gabriel, and who was now a priest and missionary.

The soldier, though obstinate in maintaining that his hurt was only a blank wound (to use a term of General Simon’s), had allowed it to be carefully dressed by the surgeon of the village, and now wore

a black bandage, which concealed one half of his forehead, and added to the natural grimness of his features. On entering the room he was not a little surprised to see a stranger holding the hands of Rose and Blanche familiarly in his own. This surprise was natural, for Dagobert did not know that the missionary had saved the lives of the orphans, and had attempted to save his also.

In the midst of the storm, tossed about by the waves, and vainly striving to cling to the rocks, the soldier had only seen Gabriel very imperfectly, at the moment when, having snatched the sisters from certain death, the young priest had fruitlessly endeavored to come to his aid. And when, after the shipwreck, Dagobert had found the orphans in safety beneath the rock of the Manor House, he fell, as we have already stated, into a swoon, caused by fatigue, emotion, and the effects of his wound—so that he had again no opportunity of observing the features of the missionary.

The veteran began to frown from beneath his black bandage and thick, gray brows, at beholding a stranger so familiar with Rose and Blanche; but the sisters ran to throw themselves into his arms, and to

cover him with filial caresses. His anger was soon dissipated by these marks of affection, though he continued, from time to time, to cast a suspicious glance at the missionary, who had risen from his seat, but whose countenance he could not well distinguish.

"How is your wound," asked Rose, anxiously. "They told us it was not dangerous."

"Does it still pain?" added Blanche.

"No, children; the surgeon of the village would bandage me up in this manner. If my head was carbonadoed with saber cuts, I could not have more wrappings. They will take me for an old milksop; it is only a blank wound, and I have a good mind to—" And there-with the soldier raised one of his hands to the bandage.

"Will you leave that alone?" cried Rose, catching his arm. "How can you be so unreasonable—at your age?"

"Well, well! don't scold! I will do what you wish, and keep it on." Then, drawing the sisters to one end of the room, he said to them in a low voice, while he looked at the young priest from the corner of his eye: "Who is that gentleman who was holding your hands when

I came in? He has very much the look of a curate. You see, my children, you must be on your guard; because—”

“*He?*” cried both sisters at once, turning toward Gabriel. “Without him, we should not now be here to kiss you.”

“What’s that?” cried the soldier, suddenly drawing up his tall figure, and gazing full at the missionary.

“It is our guardian angel,” resumed Blanche.

“Without him,” said Rose, “we must have perished this morning in the shipwreck.”

“Ah! it is he, who—” Dagobert could say no more. With swelling heart, and tears in his eyes, he ran to the missionary, offered him both his hands, and exclaimed, in a tone of gratitude impossible to describe: “Sir, I owe you the lives of these two children. I feel what a debt that service lays upon me. I will not say more—because it includes everything!”

Then, as if struck with a sudden recollection, he cried: “Stop! when I was trying to cling to a rock, so as not to be carried away by the waves, was it not you that held out your hand to me? Yes—that light hair—that youthful counte-

nance—yes—it was certainly you—now I am sure of it!”

“Unhappily, sir, my strength failed me, and I had the anguish to see you fall back into the sea.”

“I can say nothing more in the way of thanks than what I have already said,” answered Dagobert, with touching simplicity; “in preserving these children you have done more for me than if you had saved my own life. But what heart and courage!” added the soldier, with admiration; “and so young, with such a girlish look!”

“And so,” cried Blanche, joyfully, “our Gabriel came to your aid also?”

“Gabriel!” said Dagobert, interrupting Blanche, and addressing himself to the priest. “Is your name Gabriel?”

“Yes, sir.”

“Gabriel!” repeated the soldier, more and more surprised. “And a priest!” added he.

“A priest of the foreign missions.”

“Who—who brought you up?” asked the soldier, with increasing astonishment.

“An excellent and generous woman, whom I revere as the best of mothers; for she had pity on me, a deserted infant, and treated me ever as her son.”

"Frances Baudoin—was it not?" said the soldier, with deep emotion.

"It was, sir," answered Gabriel, astonished in his turn. "But how do you know this?"

"The wife of a soldier, eh?" continued Dagobert.

"Yes, of a brave soldier—who, from the most admirable devotion, is even now passing his life in exile—far from his wife—far from his son, my dear brother—for I am proud to call him by that name—"

"My Agricola!—my wife!—when did you leave them?"

"What! is it possible! You the father of Agricola?—Oh! I knew not, until now," cried Gabriel, clasping his hands together, "I knew not all the gratitude that I owed to Heaven!"

"And my wife! my child!" resumed Dagobert, in a trembling voice; "how are they? have you news of them?"

"The accounts I received, three months ago, were excellent."

"No; it is too much," cried Dagobert: "it is too much!" The veteran was unable to proceed; his feelings stifled his words, and he fell back exhausted in a chair.

And now Rose and Blanche recalled to

mind that portion of their father's letter which related to the child named Gabriel, whom the wife of Dagobert had adopted; then they also yielded to transports of innocent joy.

"Our Gabriel is the same as yours—what happiness!" cried Rose.

"Yes, my children! he belongs to you as well as to me. We have all our part in him." Then, addressing Gabriel, the soldier added with affectionate warmth: "Your hand, my brave boy! give me your hand!"

"Oh, sir! you are too good to me."

"Yes—that's it—thank me!—after all thou hast done for us!"

"Does my adopted mother know of your return?" asked Gabriel, anxious to escape from the praises of the soldier.

"I wrote to her five months since, but said that I should come alone; there was a reason for it, which I will explain by and by. Does she still live in the Rue Brise-Miche? It was there Agricola was born."

"She still lives there."

"In that case, she must have received my letter. I wished to write to her from the prison at Leipsic, but it was impossible."

"From prison! Have you just come out of prison?"

"Yes; I came straight from Germany, by the Elbe and Hamburg, and I should be still at Leipsic, but for an event which the devil must have had a hand in—a good sort of devil, though."

"What do you mean? Pray explain to me."

"That would be difficult, for I cannot explain it to myself. These little ladies," he added, pointing with a smile to Rose and Blanche, "pretended to know more about it than I did, and were continually repeating: 'It was the angel that came to our assistance, Dagobert—the good angel we told thee of—though you said you would rather have Spoilsport to defend us—' "

"Gabriel, I am waiting for you," said a stern voice, which made the missionary start. They all turned round instantly, while the dog uttered a deep growl.

It was Rodin. He stood in the doorway leading to the corridor. His features were calm and impassive, but he darted a rapid, piercing glance at the soldier and the sisters.

"Who is that man?" said Dagobert, very little prepossessed in favor of Rodin, whose countenance he found singularly repulsive. "What the mischief does he want?"

"I must go with him," answered Gabriel, in a tone of sorrowful restraint. Then turning to Rodin, he added: "A thousand pardons! I shall be ready in a moment."

"What!" cried Dagobert, stupefied with amazement, "going the very instant we have just met? No, by my faith! you shall not go. I have too much to tell you and to ask in return. We will make the journey together. It will be a real treat for me."

"It is impossible. He is my superior, and I must obey him."

"Your superior?—why he's in citizen's dress."

"He is not obliged to wear the ecclesiastical garb."

"Rubbish! since he is not in uniform, and there is no provost-marshal in your troop, send him to the—"

"Believe me, I would not hesitate a minute, if it were possible to remain."

"I was right in disliking the phis of that man," muttered Dagobert between his teeth. Then he added, with an air of impatience and vexation: "Shall I tell him that he will much oblige us by marching off by himself?"

"I beg you not to do so," said Gabriel; "it would be useless; I know my duty,

and have no will but my superior's. As soon as you arrive in Pairs, I will come and see you, as also my adopted mother, and my dear brother, Agricola."

"Well—if it must be. I have been a soldier, and know what subordination is," said Dagobert, much annoyed. "One must put a good face on bad fortune. So, the day after to-morrow, in the Rue Brise-Miche, my boy; for they tell me I can be in Paris by to-morrow evening, and we set out almost immediately. But I say—there seems to be a strict discipline with you fellows!"

"Yes, it is strict and severe," answered Gabriel, with a shudder, and a stifled sigh.

"Come, shake hands—and let's say farewell for the present. After all, twenty-four hours will soon pass away."

"Adieu! adieu!" replied the missionary, much moved, while he returned the friendly pressure of the veteran's hand.

"Adieu, Gabriel!" added the orphans, sighing also, and with tears in their eyes.

"Adieu, my sisters!" said Gabriel—and he left the room with Rodin, who had not lost a word or an incident of this scene.

Two hours after, Dagobert and the orphans had quitted the Castle for Paris, not knowing that Djalma was left at Car-

doville, being still too much injured to proceed on his journey. The half-caste, Faringhea, remained with the young prince, not wishing, he said, to desert a fellow-countryman.

We now conduct the reader to the Rue Brise-Miche, the residence of Dagobert's wife.

CHAPTER XXVII.

DAGOBERT'S WIFE.

THE following scenes occur in Paris, on the morrow of the day when the shipwrecked travelers were received in Cardoville House.

Nothing can be more gloomy than the aspect of the Rue Brise-Miche, one end of which leads into the Rue Saint-Méry, and the other into the little square of the Cloister, near the church. At this end, the street, or rather alley—for it is not more than eight feet wide—is shut in between immense black, muddy, dilapidated walls, the excessive height of which excludes both air and light; hardly, during the longest days of the year, is the sun able to throw into it a few straggling beams; while,

during the cold damp of winter, a chilling fog, which seems to penetrate everything, hangs constantly above the miry pavement of this species of oblong well.

It was about eight o'clock in the evening; by the faint, reddish light of the street lamp, hardly visible through the haze, two men, stopping at the angle of one of those enormous walls, exchanged a few words together.

"So," said one, "you understand all about it. You are to watch in the street, till you see them enter No. 5."

"All right!" answered the other.

"And when you see 'em enter, so as to make quite sure of the game, go up to Frances Baudoin's room—"

"Under the cloak of asking where the little humpbacked workwoman lives—the sister of that gay girl, the Queen of the Bacchanals."

"Yes—and you must try and find out her address also—from her humpbacked sister, if possible—for it is very important. Women of her feather change their nests like birds, and we have lost track of her."

"Make yourself easy; I will do my best with Humpy, to learn where her sister hangs out."

"And to give you steam, I'll wait for

you at the tavern opposite the Cloister, and we'll have a go of hot wine on your return."

"I'll not refuse, for the night is deucedly cold."

"Don't mention it! This morning the water friz on my sprinkling brush, and I turned as stiff as a mummy in my chair at the church door. Ah, my boy! a distributor of holy water is not always upon roses!"

"Luckily, you have the pickings—"

"Well, well—good luck to you! Don't forget the Fiver, the little passage next to the dyer's shop."

"Yes, yes—all right!" and the two men separated.

One proceeded to the Cloister Square; the other toward the further end of the street, where it led into the Rue Saint-Méry. This latter soon found the number of the house he sought—a tall, narrow building, having, like all the other houses in the street, a poor and wretched appearance. When he saw he was right, the man commenced walking backward and forward in front of the door of No. 5.

If the exterior of these buildings was uninviting, the gloom and squalor of the interior cannot be described. The house

No. 5 was, in a special degree, dirty and dilapidated. The water, which oozed from the wall, trickled down the dark and filthy staircase. On the second floor, a wisp of straw had been laid on the narrow landing-place, for wiping the feet on; but this straw being now quite rotten only served to augment the sickening odor, which arose from want of air, from damp, and from the putrid exhalations of the drains. The few openings, cut at rare intervals in the walls of the staircase, could hardly admit more than some faint rays of glimmering light.

In this quarter, one of the most populous in Paris, such houses as these, poor, cheerless, and unhealthy, are generally inhabited by the working classes. The house in question was of the number. A dyer occupied the ground floor; the deleterious vapors arising from his vats added to the stench of the whole building. On the upper stories, several artisans lodged with their families, or carried on their different trades. Up four flights of stairs was the lodging of Frances Baudoin, wife of Dagobert. It consisted of one room, with a closet adjoining, and was now lighted by a single candle. Agricola occupied a garret in the roof.

Old grayish paper, broken here and there by the cracks, covered the crazy wall, against which rested the bed; scanty curtains, running upon an iron rod, concealed the windows; the brick floor, not polished, but often washed, had preserved its natural color. At one end of this room was a round iron stove, with a large pot for culinary purposes. On the wooden table, painted yellow, marbled with brown, stood a miniature house made of iron—a masterpiece of patience and skill, the work of Agricola Baudoin, Dagobert's son.

A plaster crucifix, hung up against the wall, surrounded by several branches of consecrated box-tree, and various images of saints, very coarsely colored, bore witness to the habits of the soldier's wife. Between the windows stood one of those old walnut-wood presses, curiously fashioned, and almost black with time; an old armchair, covered with green cotton velvet (Agricola's first present to his mother), a few rush-bottomed chairs, and a work-table on which lay several bags of coarse, brown cloth, completed the furniture of this room, badly secured by a worm-eaten door. The adjoining closet contained a few kitchen and household utensils.

Mean and poor as this interior may perhaps appear, it would not seem so to the greater number of artisans; for the bed was supplied with two mattresses, clean sheets, and a warm counterpane; the old-fashioned press contained linen; and, moreover, Dagobert's wife occupied all to herself a room as large as those in which numerous families, belonging to honest and laborious workmen, often live and sleep huddled together—only too happy if the boys and girls can have separate beds, or if the sheets and blankets are not pledged at the pawnbroker's.

Frances Baudoin, seated beside the small stove, which, in the cold and damp weather, yielded but little warmth, was busied in preparing her son Agricola's evening meal.

Dagobert's wife was about fifty years of age; she wore a close jacket of blue cotton, with white flowers on it, and a stuff petticoat; a white handkerchief was tied round her head, and fastened under the chin. Her countenance was pale and meager, the features regular, and expressive of resignation and great kindness. It would have been difficult to find a better, a more courageous mother. With no resource but her labor, she had suc-

ceeded, by unwearied energy, in bringing up not only her own son Agricola, but also Gabriel, the poor, deserted child, of whom, with admirable devotion, she had ventured to take charge.

In her youth, she had, as it were, anticipated the strength of later life, by twelve years of incessant toil, rendered lucrative by the most violent exertions, and accompanied by such privations as made it almost suicidal. Then (for it was a time of splendid wages, compared to the present), by sleepless nights and constant labor, she contrived to earn about two shillings (fifty sous) a day, and with this she managed to educate her son and her adopted child.

At the end of these twelve years, her health was ruined and her strength nearly exhausted; but, at all events, her boys had wanted for nothing, and had received such an education as children of the people can obtain. About this time, M. François Hardy took Agricola as an apprentice, and Gabriel prepared to enter the priest's seminary, under the active patronage of M. Rodin, whose communications with the confessor of Frances Baudoin had become very frequent about the year 1820.

This woman (whose piety had always been excessive) was one of those simple natures endowed with extreme goodness, whose self-denial approaches to heroism, and who devote themselves in obscurity to a life of martyrdom—pure and heavenly minds, in whom the instincts of the heart supply the place of the intellect!

The only defect, or rather the necessary consequence of this extreme simplicity of character, was the invincible determination she displayed in yielding to the commands of her confessor, to whose influence she had now for many years been accustomed to submit.

She regarded this influence as most venerable and sacred; no mortal power, no human consideration, could have prevented her from obeying it. Did any dispute arise on the subject, nothing could move her on this point; she opposed to every argument a resistance entirely free from passion—mild as her disposition, calm as her conscience—but, like the latter, not to be shaken. In a word, Frances Baudoin was one of those pure, but uneducated and credulous beings, who may sometimes, in skillful and dangerous hands, become, without knowing it, the instruments of much evil.

For some time past, the bad state of her health, and particularly the increasing weakness of her sight, had condemned her to a forced repose; unable to work more than two or three hours a day, she consumed the rest of her time at church.

Frances rose from her seat, pushed the coarse bags at which she had been working to the further end of the table, and proceeded to lay the cloth for her son's supper, with maternal care and solicitude. She took from the press a small leathern bag, containing an old silver cup, very much battered, and a fork and spoon, so worn and thin, that the latter cut like a knife. These, her only *plate* (the wedding present of Dagobert) she rubbed and polished as well as she was able, and laid by the side of her son's plate. They were the most precious of her possessions, not so much for what little intrinsic value might attach to them, as for the associations they recalled, and she had often shed bitter tears, when, under the pressure of illness or want of employment, she had been compelled to carry these sacred treasures to the pawnbroker's.

Frances next took, from the lower shelf of the press, a bottle of water, and one of wine about three-quarters full, which she

also placed near her son's plate; she then returned to the stove, to watch the cooking of the supper.

Though Agricola was not much later than usual, the countenance of his mother expressed both uneasiness and grief; one might have seen, by the redness of her eyes, that she had been weeping a good deal. After long and painful uncertainty, the poor woman had just arrived at the conviction that her eye-sight, which had been growing weaker and weaker, would soon be so much impaired as to prevent her working even the two or three hours a day which had lately been the extent of her labors.

Originally, an excellent hand at the needle, she had been obliged, as her eye-sight gradually failed her, to abandon the finer for the coarser sorts of work, and her earnings had necessarily diminished in proportion; she had at length been reduced to the necessity of making those coarse bags for the army which took about four yards of sewing, and were paid at the rate of two sous each, she having to find her own thread. This work being very hard, she could at most complete three such bags in a day, and her gains thus amounted to threepence (six sous)!

It makes one shudder to think of the great number of unhappy females, whose strength has been so much exhausted by privations, old age or sickness that all the labor of which they are capable hardly suffices to bring them in daily this miserable pittance. Thus do their gains diminish in exact proportion to the increasing want which age and infirmity must occasion.

Happily, Frances had an efficient support in her son. A first-rate workman, profiting by the just scale of wages adopted by M. Hardy, his labor brought him from four to five shillings a day—more than double what was gained by workmen of many other establishments. Admitting therefore that his mother were to gain nothing, he could easily maintain both her and himself.

But the poor woman, so wonderfully economical that she denied herself even some of the necessaries of life, had of late become ruinously liberal on the score of the sacristy, since she had adopted the habit of visiting daily the parish church. Scarcely a day passed but she had masses sung, or tapers burned, either for Dago-berth, from whom she had been so long separated, or for the salvation of her son

Agricola, whom she considered on the high road to perdition. Agricola had so excellent a heart, so loved and revered his mother, and considered her actions in this respect inspired by so touching a sentiment, that he never complained when he saw a great part of his week's wages (which he paid regularly over to his mother every Saturday) disappear in pious forms.

Yet now and then he ventured to remark to Frances, with as much respect as tenderness, that it pained him to see her enduring privations injurious at her age, because she preferred incurring these devotional expenses. But what answer could he make to this excellent mother, when she replied with tears: "My child, 'tis for the salvation of your father, and yours too."

To dispute the efficacy of masses would have been venturing on a subject which Agricola, through respect for his mother's religious faith, never discussed. He contented himself, therefore, at seeing her dispense with comforts she might have enjoyed.

A discreet tap was heard at the door. "Come in," said Frances. The person came in.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE SISTER OF THE BACCHANAL QUEEN.

THE person who now entered was a girl of about eighteen, short, and very much deformed. Though not exactly a hunchback, her spine was curved; her breast was sunken, and her head deeply set in the shoulders. Her face was regular, but long, thin, very pale, and pitted with the small-pox; yet it expressed great sweetness and melancholy. Her blue eyes beamed with kindness and intelligence. By a strange freak of nature, the handsomest woman would have been proud of the magnificent hair twisted in a coarse net at the back of her head. She held an old basket in her hand. Though miserably clad, the care and neatness of her dress revealed a powerful struggle with her poverty. Notwithstanding the cold, she wore a scanty frock made of print of an indefinable color, spotted with white; but it had been so often washed that its primitive design and color had long since disappeared. In her resigned, yet suffering face, might be read a long familiarity with every form of suffering, every description

of taunting. From her birth, ridicule had ever pursued her. We have said that she was very deformed, and she was vulgarly called "Mother Bunch." Indeed it was so usual to give her this grotesque name, which every moment reminded her of her infirmity, that Frances and Agricola, though they felt as much compassion as other people showed contempt for her, never called her, however, by any other name.

Mother Bunch, as we shall therefore call her in future, was born in the house in which Dagobert's wife had resided for more than twenty years; and she had, as it were, been brought up with Agricola and Gabriel.

There are wretches fatally doomed to misery. Mother Bunch had a very pretty sister, on whom Perrine Soliveau, their common mother, the widow of a ruined tradesman, had concentrated all her affection, while she treated her deformed child with contempt and unkindness. The latter would often come, weeping, to Frances, on this account, who tried to console her, and in the long evenings amused her by teaching her to read and sew. Accustomed to pity her by their mother's example, instead of imitating other children,

who always taunted and sometimes even beat her, Agricola and Gabriel liked her, and used to protect and defend her.

She was about fifteen, and her sister Cephyse was about seventeen, when their mother died, leaving them both in utter poverty. Cephyse was intelligent, active, clever, but different to her sister; she had the lively, alert, hoydenish character which requires air, exercise and pleasures—a good girl enough, but foolishly spoiled by her mother. Cephyse, listening at first to Frances's good advice, resigned herself to her lot; and, having learned to sew, worked like her sister, for about a year. But, unable to endure any longer the bitter privations her insignificant earnings, notwithstanding her incessant toil, exposed her to—privations which often bordered on starvation—Cephyse, young, pretty, of warm temperament, and surrounded by brilliant offers and seductions—brilliant, indeed, for her, since they offered food to satisfy her hunger, shelter from the cold, and decent raiment, without being obliged to work fifteen hours a day in an obscure and unwholesome hovel—Cephyse listened to the vows of a young lawyer's clerk, who forsook her soon after. She formed a connection with another

clerk, whom she (instructed by the examples set her) forsook in turn for a bag-man, whom she afterward cast off for other favorites. In a word, what with changing and being forsaken, Cephyse in the course of one or two years was the idol of a set of grisettes, students and clerks; and acquired such a reputation at the balls on the Hampstead Heaths of Paris, by her decision of character, original turn of mind, and unwearied ardor in all kinds of pleasures, and especially by her wild noisy gayety, that she was termed the Bacchanal Queen, and proved herself in every way worthy of this bewildering royalty.

From that time poor Mother Bunch only heard of her sister at rare intervals. She still mourned for her, and continued to toil hard to gain her three-and-six a week. The unfortunate girl, having been taught sewing by Frances, made coarse shirts for the common people and the army. For these she received half-a-crown a dozen. They had to be hemmed, stitched, provided with collars and wristbands, buttons, and button-holes: and at the most, when at work twelve and fifteen hours a day, she rarely succeeded in turning out more than fourteen or sixteen shirts a week—an ex-

cessive amount of toil that brought her in about three shillings and fourpence a week. And the case of this poor girl was neither accidental nor uncommon. And this, because the remuneration given for women's work is an example of revolting injustice and savage barbarism. They are paid not half as much as men who are employed at the needle: such as tailors and makers of gloves, or waistcoats, etc.—no doubt because women can work as well as men—because they are more weak and delicate—and because their need may be twofold as great when they become mothers.

Well, Mother Bunch fagged on, with three-and-four a week. That is to say, toiling hard for twelve or fifteen hours every day, she succeeded in keeping herself alive, in spite of exposure to hunger, cold, and poverty—so numerous were her privations. Privations? No! The word privation expresses but weakly that constant and terrible want of all that is necessary to preserve the existence God gives; namely, wholesome air and shelter, sufficient and nourishing food, and warm clothing. Mortification would be a better word to describe that total want of all that is essentially vital, which a justly

organized state of society ought—yes—ought necessarily to bestow on every active honest workman and workwoman, since civilization has dispossessed them of all territorial right, and left them no other patrimony than their hands.

The savage does not enjoy the advantage of civilization; but he has, at least, the beasts of the field, the fowls of the air, the fishes of the sea, and the fruits of the earth, to feed him, and his native woods for shelter and for fuel. The civilized man, disinherited of these gifts, considering the rights of property as sacred, may, in return for his hard daily labor, which enriches his country, demand wages that will enable him to live in the enjoyment of health: nothing more, and nothing less. For is it living, to drag along on the extreme edge which separates life from the grave, and even there continually struggle against cold, hunger, and disease? And to show how far the mortification which society imposes thus inexorably on its millions of honest, industrious laborers (by its careless disregard of all the questions which concern the just remuneration of labor) may extend, we will describe how this poor girl contrived to live on three shillings and sixpence a week.

Society, perhaps, may then feel its obligation to so many unfortunate wretches for supporting, with resignation, the horrible existence which leaves them just sufficient life to feel the worst pangs of humanity. Yes: to live at such a price is virtue! Yes, society thus organized, whether it tolerates or imposes so much misery, loses all right to blame the poor wretches who sell themselves, not through debauchery, but because they are cold and famishing. This poor girl spent her wages as follows:

Six pounds of bread, second quality	0 8 $\frac{1}{2}$
Four pails of water	0 2
Lard or dripping (butter being out of the question)	0 5
Coarse salt	0 0 $\frac{3}{4}$
A bushel of charcoal	0 4
A quart of dried vegetables	0 3
Three quarts of potatoes	0 2
Dips	0 3 $\frac{1}{4}$
Thread and needles	0 2 $\frac{1}{2}$
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	2 7

To save charcoal, Mother Bunch prepared soup only two or three times a week at most, on a stove that stood on the landing of the fourth story. On other days she ate it cold. There remained nine or ten pence a week for clothes and lodging.

By rare good fortune, her situation was in one respect an exception to the lot of many others. Agricola, that he might not wound her delicacy, had come to a secret arrangement with the housekeeper, and hired a garret for her, just large enough to hold a small bed, a chair, and a table; for which the seamstress had to pay five shillings a year. But Agricola, in fulfillment of his agreement with the porter, paid the balance, to make up the actual rent of the garret, which was twelve and sixpence. The poor girl had thus about eighteen-pence a month left for her other expenses. But many workwomen, whose position is less fortunate than hers, since they have neither home nor family, buy a piece of bread and some other food to keep them through the day; and at night patronize the "two-penny rope," one with another, in a wretched room containing five or six beds, some of which are always engaged by men, as male lodgers are by far the most abundant. Yes; and in spite of the disgust that a poor and virtuous girl must feel at this arrangement, she must submit to it; for a lodging-house keeper cannot have separate rooms for females. To furnish a room, however meanly, the poor workwoman must possess three or four

shillings in ready money. But how save this sum, out of weekly earnings of a couple of florins, which are scarcely sufficient to keep her from starving, and are still less sufficient to clothe her? No! no! The poor wretch must resign herself to this repugnant cohabitation; and so, gradually, the instinct of modesty becomes weakened; the natural sentiment of chastity, that saved her from the "gay life," becomes extinct; vice appears to be the only means of improving her intolerable condition; she yields; and the first "man made of money," who can afford a governess for his children, cries out against the depravity of the lower orders! And yet, painful as the condition of the working woman is, it is relatively fortunate. Should work fail her for one day, two days, what then? Should sickness come — sickness almost always occasioned by unwholesome food, want of fresh air, necessary attention, and good rest; sickness, often so enervating as to render work impossible; though not so dangerous as to procure the sufferer a bed in a hospital — what becomes of the hapless wretches then? The mind hesitates, and shrinks from dwelling on such gloomy pictures.

This inadequacy of wages, one terrible source of so many evils, and often of so many vices, is general, especially among women; and, again, this is not private wretchedness, but the wretchedness which afflicts whole classes, the type of which we endeavor to develop in Mother Bunch. It exhibits the moral and physical condition of thousands of human creatures in Paris, obliged to subsist on a scanty four shillings a week. This poor workwoman, then, notwithstanding the advantages she unknowingly enjoyed through Agricola's generosity, lived very miserably; and her health, already shattered, was now wholly undermined by these constant hardships. Yet, with extreme delicacy, though ignorant of the little sacrifice already made for her by Agricola, Mother Bunch pretended she earned more than she really did, in order to avoid offers of service which it would have pained her to accept, because she knew the limited means of Frances and her son, and because it would have wounded her natural delicacy, rendered still more sensitive by so many sorrows and humiliations.

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But, singular as it may appear, this deformed body contained a loving and gen-

erous soul — a mind cultivated even to poetry; and let us add, that this was owing to the example of Agricola Baudoin, with whom she had been brought up, and who had naturally the gift. This poor girl was the first confidante to whom our young mechanic imparted his literary essays; and when he told her of the charm and extreme relief he found in poetic reverie, after a day of hard toil, the workwoman, gifted with strong natural intelligence, felt, in her turn, how great a resource this would be to her in her lonely and despised condition.

One day, to Agricola's great surprise, who had just read some verses to her, the sewing girl, with smiles and blushes, timidly communicated to him also a poetic composition. Her verses wanted rhythm and harmony, perhaps: but they were simple and affecting, as a non-venomous complaint intrusted to a friendly hearer. From that day Agricola and she held frequent consultations: they gave each other mutual encouragement: but with this exception, no one else knew anything of the girl's poetical essays, whose mild timidity made her often pass for a person of weak intellect. This soul must have been great and beautiful, for in all her unlettered

strains there was not a word of murmuring respecting her hard lot: her note was sad, but gentle—desponding, but resigned: it was especially the language of deep tenderness—of mournful sympathy—of angelic charity for all poor creatures consigned, like her, to bear the double burden of poverty and deformity. Yet she often expressed a sincere free-spoken admiration of beauty, free from all envy or bitterness: she admired beauty as she admired the sun. But, alas! many were the verses of hers that Agricola had never seen, and which he was never to see.

The young mechanic, though not strictly handsome, had an open masculine face: was as courageous as kind: possessed a noble, glowing, generous heart, a superior mind, and a frank, pleasing gayety of spirits. The young girl, brought up with him, loved him as an unfortunate creature can love, who, dreading cruel ridicule, is obliged to hide her affection in the depths of her heart, and adopt reserve and deep dissimulation. She need not seek to combat her love: to what purpose should she do so? No one would ever know it. Her well-known sisterly affection for Agricola explained the interest she took in all that concerned him: so that no one was sur-

prised at the extreme grief of the young workwoman, when, in 1830, Agricola, after fighting intrepidly for the people's flag, was brought bleeding home to his mother. Dagobert's son, deceived, like others, on this point, had never suspected, and was destined never to suspect, this love for him.

Such was the poorly clad girl who entered the room in which Frances was preparing her son's supper.

"Is it you, my poor love?" said she. "I have not seen you since morning: have you been ill? Come and kiss me."

The young girl kissed Agricola's mother, and replied: "I was very busy about some work, mother: I did not wish to lose a moment: I have only just finished it. I am going down to fetch some charcoal—do you want anything while I'm out?"

"No, no, my child, thank you. But I am very uneasy. It is half-past eight, and Agricola is not come home." Then she added, after a sigh: "He kills himself with work for me. Ah, I am very unhappy, my girl: my sight is quite going. In a quarter of an hour after I begin working I cannot see at all—not even to sew sacks. The idea of being a burden to my son drives me distracted."

"Oh, don't, ma'am. if Agricola heard you say that—"

"I know the poor boy thinks of nothing but me, and that augments my vexation. Only I think that, rather than leave me, he gives up the advantages that his fellow-workmen enjoy at Hardy's, his good and worthy master—instead of living in this dull garret, where it is scarcely light at noon, he would enjoy, like the other workmen, at very little expense, a good light room, warm in winter, airy in summer, with a view of the gardens. And he is so fond of trees! not to mention that this place is so far from his work that it is quite a toil to him to get to it."

"Or, when he embraces you he forgets his fatigue, Mrs. Baudoin," said Mother Bunch; "besides, he knows how you cling to the house in which he was born. M. Hardy offered to settle you at Plessy with Agricola, in the building put up for the workmen."

"Yes, my child: but then I must give up church. I can't do that."

"But—be easy, I hear him," said the hunchback, blushing.

A sonorous, joyous voice was heard singing on the stairs.

"At least I'll not let him see I have been

crying," said the good mother, drying her tears. "This is the only moment of rest and ease from toil he has—I must not make it sad to him."

CHAPTER XXIX.

AGRICOLA BAUDOIN.

OUR blacksmith poet, a tall young man, about four-and-twenty years of age, was alert and robust, with ruddy complexion, dark hair and eyes, and aquiline nose, and an open, expressive countenance. His resemblance to Dagobert was rendered more striking by the thick brown mustache which he wore according to the fashion: and a sharp pointed imperial covered his chin. His cheeks, however, were shaven. Olive colored velveteen trousers, a blue blouse, bronzed by the forge smoke, a black cravat, tied carelessly round his muscular neck, a cloth cap with a narrow vizor, composed his dress. The only thing which contrasted singularly with his working habiliments was a handsome purple flower, with silvery pistils, which he held in his hand.

"Good-evening, mother," said he, as he came to kiss Frances immediately.

Then, with a friendly nod, he added, "Good-evening, Mother Bunch."

"You are very late, my child," said Frances, approaching the little stove on which her son's simple meal was simmering; "I was getting very anxious."

"Anxious about me, or about my supper, dear mother?" said Agricola, gayly; "the deuce! you won't excuse me for keeping the nice little supper waiting that you get ready for me, for fear it should be spoiled, eh?"

So saying, the blacksmith tried to kiss his mother again.

"Have done, you naughty boy; you'll make me upset the pan."

"That would be a pity, mother; for it smells delightfully. Let's see what it is."

"Wait half a moment."

"I'll swear, now, you have some of the fried potatoes and bacon I'm so fond of."

"Being Saturday, of course!" said Frances, in a tone of mild reproach.

"True," rejoined Agricola, exchanging a smile of innocent cunning with Mother Bunch; "but, talking of Saturday, mother, here are my wages."

"Thank ye, child; put the money in the cupboard."

"Yes, mother!"

"Oh, dear," cried the young seamstress, just as Agricola was about to put away

the money, "what a handsome flower you have in your hand, Agricola. I never saw a finer. In winter, too! Do look at it, Mrs. Baudoin."

"See there, mother," said Agricola, taking the flower to her: "look at it, admire it, and especially smell it. You can't have a sweeter perfume; a blending of vanilla and orange blossom."

"Indeed, it does smell nice, child. Goodness! how handsome!" said Frances, admiringly; "where did you find it?"

"Find it, my good mother!" repeated Agricola, smilingly: "do you think folks pick up such things between the Barrière du Maine and the Rue Brise Miche?"

"How did you get it then?" inquired the sewing-girl, sharing in Frances's curiosity.

"Oh! you would like to know? Well, I'll satisfy you, and explain why I came home so late; for something else detained me. It has been an evening of adventures, I promise you. I was hurrying home, when I heard a low, gentle barking at the corner of the Rue de Babylone; it was just about dusk, and I could see a very pretty little dog, scarce bigger than my fist, black and tan, with long silky hair, and ears that covered its paws."

"Lost, poor thing, I warrant," said Frances.

"You've hit it. I took up the poor thing, and it began to lick my hands. Round its neck was a red satin ribbon, tied in a large bow; but as that did not bear the master's name, I looked beneath it, and saw a small collar, made of a gold plate and small gold chains. So I took a lucifer match from my 'bacco-box, and striking a light, I read, 'FRISKY belongs to Mademoiselle Adrienne de Cardoville, No. 7, Rue de Babylone.' "

"Why, you were just in the street," said Mother Bunch.

"Just so. Taking the little animal under my arm, I looked about me till I came to a long garden wall, which seemed to have no end, and found a small door of a summer-house, belonging no doubt to the large mansion at the other end of the park; for this garden looked just like a park. So, looking up, I saw 'No. 7,' newly painted over a little door with a grated slide. I rang; and in a few minutes, spent, no doubt, in observing me through the bars (for I am sure I saw a pair of eyes peeping through), the gate opened. And now, you'll not believe a word I have to say."

“Why not, my child?”

“Because it seems like a fairy tale.”

“A fairy tale?” said Mother Bunch, as if she was really her namesake of elfish history.

“For all the world it does. I am quite astounded, even now, at my adventure; it is like the remembrance of a dream.”

“Well, let us have it,” said the worthy mother, so deeply interested that she did not perceive her son’s supper was beginning to burn.

“First,” said the blacksmith, smiling at the curiosity he had excited, “a young lady opened the door to me, but so lovely, so beautifully and gracefully dressed, that you would have taken her for a beautiful portrait of past times. Before I could say a word, she exclaimed, ‘Ah! dear me, sir, you have brought back Frisky; how happy Miss Adrienne will be! Come, pray come in instantly; she would so regret not having an opportunity to thank you in person!’ And without giving me time to reply, she beckoned me to follow her. Oh, dear mother, it is quite out of my power to tell you all the magnificence I saw, as I passed through a small saloon, partially lighted, and full of perfume! It would be impossible. The young woman walked too

quickly. A door opened — Oh, such a sight! I was so dazzled I can remember nothing but a great glare of gold and light, crystal and flowers; and, amid all this brilliancy, a young lady of extreme beauty — ideal beauty; but she had red hair, or rather hair shining like gold! Oh! it was charming to look at! I never saw such hair before. She had black eyes, ruddy lips, and her skin seemed white as snow. This is all I can recollect; for, as I said before, I was so dazzled, I seemed to be looking through a veil. ‘Madame,’ said the young woman, whom I never should have taken for a lady’s-maid, she was dressed so elegantly, ‘here is Frisky. This gentleman found him, and brought him back.’ ‘Oh! sir,’ said the young lady with the golden hair, in a sweet, silvery voice, ‘what thanks I owe you! I am foolishly attached to Frisky.’ Then, no doubt, concluding from my dress that she ought to thank me in some other way than by words, she took up a silk purse, and said to me, though I must confess with some hesitation—‘No doubt, sir, it gave you some trouble to bring my pet back. You have, perhaps, lost some valuable time—allow me—’ She held forth her purse.”

"Oh, Agricola," said Mother Bunch, sadly; "how people may be deceived!"

"Hear the end and you will, perhaps, forgive the young lady. Seeing by my looks that the offer of her purse hurt me, she took a magnificent porcelain vase that contained this flower, and addressing me in a tone full of grace and kindness, that left me room to guess that she was vexed at having wounded me, she said—'At least, sir, you will accept this flower.'"

"You are right, Agricola," said the girl, smiling sadly, "an involuntary error could not be repaired in a nicer way."

"Worthy young lady," said Frances, wiping her eyes; "how well she understood my Agricola!"

"Did she not, mother? But just as I was taking the flower, without daring to raise my eyes (for, notwithstanding the young lady's kind manner, there was something very imposing about her), another handsome girl, tall and dark, and dressed to the top of fashion, came in and said to the red-haired young lady, 'He is here, madame.' She immediately rose and said to me, 'A thousand pardons, sir. I shall never forget that I am indebted to you for a moment of much pleasure. Pray remember, on all occasions, my address.

and name — Adrienne de Cardoville.' Thereupon she disappeared. I could not find a word to say in reply. The same young woman showed me to the door, and courtesied to me very politely. And there I stood in the Rue de Babylone, as dazzled and astonished as if I had come out of an enchanted palace."

"Indeed, my child, it is like a fairy tale. Is it not, my poor girl?"

"Yes, ma'am," said Mother Bunch, in an absent manner that Agricola did not observe.

"What affected me most," rejoined Agricola, "was that the young lady, on seeing her little dog, did not forget me for it, as many would have done in her place, and took no notice of it before me. That shows delicacy and feeling, does it not? Indeed, I believe this young lady to be so kind and generous that I should not hesitate to have recourse to her in any important case."

"Yes, you are right," replied the seamstress, more and more absent.

The poor girl suffered extremely. She felt no jealousy, no hatred, toward this young stranger, who, from her beauty, wealth, and delicacy, seemed to belong to a sphere too splendid and elevated to be

even within the reach of a work-girl's vision; but, making an involuntary comparison of this fortunate condition with her own, the poor thing had never felt more cruelly her deformity and poverty. Yet such were the humility and gentle resignation of this noble creature that the only thing which made her feel ill-disposed toward Adrienne de Cardoville was the offer of the purse to Agricola; but the charming way in which the young lady had atoned for her error affected the seamstress deeply. Yet her heart was ready to break. She could not restrain her tears, as she contemplated the magnificent flower — so rich in color and perfume, which, given by a charming hand, was doubtless very precious to Agricola.

“Now, mother,” resumed the young man smilingly, and unaware of the painful emotion of the other bystander, “you have had the cream of my adventures first. I have told you one of the causes of my delay; and now for the other. Just now, as I was coming in, I met the dyer at the foot of the stairs, his arms a beautiful pea-green. Stopping me, he said, with an air full of importance, that he thought he had seen a chap sneaking about the house like a spy. ‘Well, what is that to you, Daddy

Loriot?" said I; 'are you afraid he will nose out the way to make the beautiful green, with which you are dyed up to the very elbows?' "

"But who could that man be, Agricola?" said Frances.

"On my word, mother, I don't know and scarcely care; I tried to persuade Daddy Loriot, who chatters like a magpie, to return to his cellar, since it could signify as little to him as to me, whether a spy watched him or not." So saying, Agricola went and placed the little leathern sack, containing his wages, on a shelf, in the cupboard.

As Frances put down the saucepan on the end of the table, Mother Bunch, recovering from her reverie, filled a basin with water, and, taking it to the blacksmith, said to him in a gentle tone:

"Agricola—for your hands."

"Thank you, little sister. How kind you are!" Then with a most unaffected gesture and tone, he added, "There is my fine flower for your trouble."

"Do you give it to me?" cried the seamstress, with emotion, while a vivid blush colored her pale and interesting face. "Do you give me this handsome flower, which a lovely rich young lady so kindly and

graciously gave you?" And the poor thing repeated, with growing astonishment, "Do you give it to me?"

"What the deuce should I do with it? Wear it on my heart, have it set as a pin?" said Agricola, smiling. "It is true I was very much impressed by the charming way in which the young lady thanked me. I am delighted to think I found her little dog, and very happy to be able to give you this flower, since it pleases you. You see the day has been a happy one."

While Mother Bunch, trembling with pleasure, emotion, and surprise, took the flower, the young blacksmith washed his hands, so black with smoke and steel filings that the water became dark in an instant. Agricola, pointing out this change to the seamstress, said to her in a whisper, laughing:

"Here's cheap ink for us paper stainers! I finished some verses yesterday, which I am rather satisfied with. I will read them to you."

With this, Agricola wiped his hands naturally on the front of his blouse, while Mother Bunch replaced the basin on the chest of drawers, and laid the flower against the side of it.

"Can't you ask for a towel," said

Frances, shrugging her shoulders, "instead of wiping your hands on your blouse?"

"After being scorched all day long at the forge, it will be all the better for a little cooling to-night, won't it? Am I disobedient, mother? Scold me, then, if you dare! Come, let us see you."

Frances made no reply; but, placing her hands on either side of her son's head, so beautiful in its candor, resolution and intelligence, she surveyed him for a moment with maternal pride, and kissed him repeatedly on the forehead.

"Come," said she, "sit down; you stand all day at your forge, and it is late."

"So—your armchair again!" said Agricola.—"Our usual quarrel every evening—take it away, I shall be quite as much at ease on another."

"No, no! You ought at least to rest after your hard toil."

"What tyranny!" said Agricola, gayly, sitting down. "Well, I preach like a good apostle; but I am quite at ease in your armchair, after all. Since I sat down on the throne in the Tuilleries, I have never had a better seat."

Frances Baudoin, standing on one side of the table, cut a slice of bread for her

son, while Mother Bunch, on the other, filled his silver mug. There was something affecting in the attentive eagerness of the two excellent creatures for him whom they loved so tenderly.

"Won't you sup with me?" said Agricola to the girl.

"Thank you, Agricola," replied the seamstress, looking down, "I have only just dined."

"Oh, I only ask you for form's sake—you have your whims—we can never prevail on you to eat with us—just like mother: she prefers dining all alone; and in that way she deprives herself without my knowing it."

"Goodness, child! It is better for my health to dine early. Well, do you find it nice?"

"Nice! call it excellent! Stockfish and parsnips. Oh, I am very fond of stockfish; I should have been born a Newfoundland fisherman."

This worthy lad, on the contrary, was but poorly refreshed, after a hard day's toil, with this paltry stew—a little burned as it had been, too, during his story; but he knew he pleased his mother by observing the fast without complaining. He affected to enjoy his meal; and the good

woman accordingly observed with satisfaction :

"Oh, I see you like it, my dear boy; Friday and Saturday next we'll have some more."

"Thank you, mother—only not two days together. One gets tired of luxuries, you know! And now let us talk of what we shall do to-morrow—Sunday. We must be very merry, for the last few days you seem very sad, dear mother, and I can't make it out—I fancy you are not satisfied with me."

"Oh, my dear child! you—the pattern of—"

"Well, well! Prove to me that you are happy, then, by taking a little amusement. Perhaps you will do us the honor of accompanying us, as you did last time," added Agricola, bowing to Mother Bunch.

The latter blushed and looked down; her face assumed an expression of bitter grief, and she made no reply.

"I have the prayers to attend all day, you know, my dear child," said Frances to her son.

"Well, in the evening then? I don't propose the theater; but they say there is a conjurer to be seen whose tricks are very amusing."

"I am obliged to you, my son; but that is a kind of theater."

"Dear mother, this is unreasonable!"

"My dear child, do I ever hinder others from doing what they like?"

"True, dear mother, forgive me. Well, then, if it should be fine, we will simply take a walk with Mother Bunch on the Boulevards. It is nearly three months since she went out with us; and she never goes out without us."

"No, no; go alone, my child. Enjoy your Sunday, 'tis little enough."

"You know very well, Agricola," said the seamstress, blushing up to the eyes, "that I ought not to go out with you and your mother again."

"Why not, madame? May I ask, without impropriety, the cause of this refusal?" said Agricola, gayly.

The poor girl smiled sadly, and replied, "Because I will not expose you to a quarrel on my account, Agricola."

"Forgive me," said Agricola, in a tone of sincere grief, and he struck his forehead vexedly.

To this Mother Bunch alluded sometimes, but very rarely, for she observed punctilious discretion. The girl had gone out with Agricola and his mother. Such

occasions were, indeed, holidays for her. Many days and nights had she toiled hard to procure a decent bonnet and shawl, that she might not do discredit to her friends. The five or six days of holidays, thus spent arm-in-arm with him whom she adored in secret, formed the sum of her happy days.

Taking their last walk, a coarse, vulgar man elbowed her so rudely that the poor girl could not refrain from a cry of terror, and the man retorted to it by saying:

“What are you rolling your hump in my way for, stoopid?”

Agricola, like his father, had the patience which force and courage give to the truly brave; but he was extremely quick when it became necessary to avenge an insult. Irritated at the vulgarity of this man, Agricola left his mother's arm, to inflict on the brute, who was of his own age, size and force, two vigorous blows, such as the powerful arm and huge fist of a blacksmith never before inflicted on human face. The villain attempted to return it, and Agricola repeated the correction, to the amusement of the crowd, and the fellow slunk away amid a deluge of hisses. This adventure made Mother Bunch say she would not go out with Agricola again,

in order to save him any occasion of quarrel. We may conceive the blacksmith's regret at having thus unwittingly revived the memory of this circumstance—more painful, alas! for Mother Bunch than Agricola could imagine, for she loved him passionately, and her infirmity had been the cause of that quarrel. Notwithstanding his strength and resolution, Agricola was childishly sensitive; and, thinking how painful that thought must be to the poor girl, a large tear filled his eyes, and holding out his hands he said, in a brotherly tone, "Forgive my heedlessness! Come, kiss me." And he gave her thin, pale cheeks two hearty kisses.

The poor girl's lips turned pale at this cordial caress; and her heart beat so violently that she was obliged to lean against the corner of the table.

"Come, you forgive me, do you not?" said Agricola.

"Yes! yes!" she said, trying to subdue her emotion; "but the recollection of that quarrel pains me—I was so alarmed on your account; if the crowd had sided with that man?"

"Alas!" said Frances, coming to the sewing girl's relief, without knowing it, "I was never so afraid in all my life!"

"Oh, mother," rejoined Agricola, trying to change a conversation which had now become disagreeable for the seamstress, "for the wife of a horse grenadier of the Imperial Guard, you have not much courage. Oh, my brave father; I can't believe he is really coming? The very thought turns me topsy-turvy!"

"Heaven grant he may come," said Frances, with a sigh.

"God grant it, mother. He will grant it, I should think. Lord knows, you have had masses enough said for his return."

"Agricola, my child," said Frances, interrupting her son, and shaking her head sadly, "do not speak in that way. Besides, you are talking of your father."

"Well, I'm in for it this evening. 'Tis your turn now; positively, I am growing stupid, or going crazy. Forgive me, mother! forgive! That's the only word I can get out to-night. You know that, when I do let out on certain subjects, it is because I can't help it; for I know well the pain it gives you."

"You do not offend me, my poor, dear, misguided boy."

"It comes to the same thing; and there is nothing so bad as to offend one's mother; and, with respect to what I said about

father's return, I do not see that we have any cause to doubt it."

"But we have not heard from him for four months."

"You know, mother, in his letter—that is, in the letter which he dictated (for you remember that, with the candor of an old soldier, he told us that, if he could read tolerably well, he could not write)—well, in that letter he said we were not to be anxious about him; that he expected to be in Paris about the end of January, and would send us word, three or four days before, by what road he expected to arrive, that I might go and meet him."

"True, my child; and February is come, and no news yet."

"The greater reason why we should wait patiently. But I'll tell you more: I should not be surprised if our good Gabriel were to come back about the same time. His last letter from America makes me hope so. What pleasure, mother, should all the family be together!"

"Oh, yes, my child! It would be a happy day for me."

"And that day will soon come, trust me."

"Do you remember your father, Agricola?" inquired Mother Bunch.

“To tell the truth, I remember most his great grenadier’s shako and mustache, which used to frighten me so that nothing but the red ribbon of his cross of honor on the white facings of his uniform, and the shining handle of his saber, could pacify me; could it, mother? But what is the matter? You are weeping!”

“Alas! poor Baudoin! What he must suffer at being separated from us at his age—sixty and past! Alas! my child, my heart breaks when I think that he comes home only to change one kind of poverty for another.”

“What do you mean?”

“Alas! I earn nothing now.”

“Why, what’s become of me? Isn’t there a room here for you and for him: and a table for you too? Only, my good mother, since we are talking of domestic affairs,” added the blacksmith, imparting increased tenderness to his tone, that he might not shock his mother, “when he and Gabriel come home, you won’t want to have any more masses said and tapers burned for them, will you? Well, that saving will enable father to have tobacco to smoke, and his bottle of wine every day. Then, on Sundays, we will take a nice dinner at the eating-house.”

A knocking at the door disturbed Agricola.

"Come in," said he. Instead of doing so, some one half opened the door, and thrusting in an arm of a pea-green color, made signs to the blacksmith.

"'Tis old Loriot, the pattern of dyers," said Agricola; "come in, Daddy, 'no ceremony.'"

"Impossible, my lad; I am dripping with dye from head to foot; I should cover missus's floor with green."

"So much the better. It will remind me of the fields I like so much."

"Without joking, Agricola, I must speak to you immediately."

"About the spy, eh? Oh, be easy; what's he to us?"

"No; I think he's gone; at any rate, the fog is so thick I can't see him. But that's not it—come, come quickly! It is very important," said the dyer, with a mysterious look; "and only concerns you."

"Me, only?" said Agricola, with surprise. "What can it be?"

"Go and see, my child," said Frances.

"Yes, mother; but the deuce take me if I can make it out."

And the blacksmith left the room, leaving his mother with Mother Bunch.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE RETURN.

IN five minutes Agricola returned: his face was pale and agitated—his eyes glistened with tears, and his hands trembled; but his countenance expressed extraordinary happiness and emotion. He stood at the door for a moment, as if too much affected to accost his mother.

Frances's sight was so bad that she did not immediately perceive the change her son's countenance had undergone.

"Well, my child—what is it?" she inquired.

Before the blacksmith could reply, Mother Bunch, who had more discernment, exclaimed: "Goodness, Agricola—how pale you are! Whatever is the matter?"

"Mother," said the artisan, hastening to Frances, without replying to the seamstress—"mother, expect news that will astonish you; but promise me you will be calm."

"What do you mean? How you tremble! Look at me! Mother Bunch was right—you are quite pale."

“My kind mother!”—and Agricola, kneeling before Frances, took both her hands in his—“you must—you do not know—but—”

The blacksmith could not go on. Tears of joy interrupted his speech. “You weep, my dear child! Your tears alarm me! What is the matter? you terrify me!”

“Oh, no, I would not terrify you; on the contrary,” said Agricola, drying his eyes—“you will be so happy. But, again, you must try and command your feelings, for too much joy is as hurtful as too much grief.”

“What?”

“Did I not say true, when I said he would come?”

“Father!” cried Frances. She rose from her seat; but her surprise and emotion were so great that she put one hand to her heart to still its beating, and then she felt her strength fail. Her son sustained her, and assisted her to sit down.

Mother Bunch, till now, had stood discreetly apart, witnessing from a distance the scene which completely engrossed Agricola and his mother. But she now drew near timidly, thinking she might be useful; for Frances changed color more and more.

"Come, courage, mother," said the blacksmith; "now the shock is over, you have only to enjoy the pleasure of seeing my father."

"My poor man! after eighteen years' absence. Oh, I cannot believe it," said Frances, bursting into tears. "Is it true? Is it, indeed, true?"

"So true, that if you will promise me to keep as calm as you can, I will tell you when you may see him."

"Soon—may I not?"

"Yes; soon."

"But when will he arrive?"

"He may arrive at any minute—to-morrow—perhaps to-day."

"To-day!"

"Yes, mother! Well, I must tell you all—he has arrived."

"He—he is—" Frances could not articulate the word.

"He was downstairs just now. Before coming up, he sent the dyer to apprise me that I might prepare you; for my brave father feared the surprise might hurt you."

"Oh, heaven!"

"And now," cried the blacksmith, in an accent of indescribable joy—"he is there, waiting! Oh, mother! for the last ten minutes I have scarcely been able to con-

tain myself—my heart is bursting with joy.” And running to the door, he threw it open.

Dagobert, holding Rose and Blanche by the hand, stood on the threshold. Instead of rushing to her husband’s arms, Frances fell on her knees in prayer. She thanked Heaven with profound gratitude for hearing her prayers, and thus accepting her offerings. During a second, the actors of this scene stood silent and motionless. Agricola, by a sentiment of respect and delicacy, which struggled violently with his affection, did not dare to fall on his father’s neck. He waited with constrained impatience till his mother had finished her prayer.

The soldier experienced the same feeling as the blacksmith; they understood each other. The first glance exchanged by father and son expressed their affection—their veneration for that excellent woman, who, in the fullness of her religious fervor, forgot, perhaps, too much the creature for the Creator.

Rose and Blanche, confused and affected, looked with interest on the kneeling woman; while Mother Bunch, shedding in silence tears of joy at the thought of Agricola’s happiness, withdrew into the most

obscure corner of the room, feeling that she was a stranger, and necessarily out of place in that family meeting. Frances rose, and took a step toward her husband, who received her in his arms. There was a moment of solemn silence. Dagobert and Frances said not a word. Nothing could be heard but a few sighs, mingled with tears of joy. And, when the aged couple looked up, their expression was calm, radiant, serene; for the full and complete enjoyment of simple and pure sentiments never leaves behind a feverish and violent agitation.

"My children," said the soldier, in tones of emotion, presenting the orphans to Frances, who, after her first agitation, had surveyed them with astonishment, "this is my good and worthy wife; she will be to the daughters of General Simon what I have been to them."

"Then, madame, you will treat us as your children," said Rose, approaching Frances with her sister.

"The daughters of General Simon!" cried Dagobert's wife, more and more astonished.

"Yes, my dear Frances; I have brought them from afar—not without some difficulty; but I will tell you that by-and-by."

“Poor little things! One would take them for two angels, exactly alike!” said Frances, contemplating the orphans with as much interest as admiration.

“Now for us,” cried Dagobert, turning to his son.

“At last,” rejoined the latter.

We must renounce all attempts to describe the wild joy of Dagobert and his son, and the crushing grip of their hands, which Dagobert interrupted only to look in Agricola’s face; while he rested his hands on the young blacksmith’s broad shoulders, that he might see to more advantage his frank masculine countenance and robust frame. Then he shook his hand again, exclaiming, “He’s a fine fellow—well built—what a good-hearted look he has!”

From a corner of the room Mother Bunch enjoyed Agricola’s happiness; but she feared that her presence, till then unheeded, would be an intrusion. She wished to withdraw unnoticed, but could not do so. Dagobert and his son were between her and the door; and she stood unable to take her eyes from the charming faces of Rose and Blanche. She had never seen anything so winsome; and the extraordinary resemblance of the sisters increased

her surprise. Then, their humble mourning revealing that they were poor, Mother Bunch involuntarily felt more sympathy toward them.

“Dear children! They are cold; their little hands are frozen, and, unfortunately, the fire is out,” said Frances. She tried to warm the orphan’s hands in hers, while Dagobert and his son gave themselves up to the feelings of affection, so long restrained.

As soon as Frances said that the fire was out, Mother Bunch hastened to make herself useful, as an excuse for her presence; and, going to the cupboard, where the charcoal and wood were kept, she took some small pieces, and, kneeling before the stove, succeeded, by the aid of a few embers that remained, in relighting the fire, which soon began to draw and blaze. Filling a coffee-pot with water, she placed it on the stove, presuming that the orphans required some warm drink. The seamstress did all this with so much dexterity and so little noise—she was naturally so forgotten amid the emotions of the scene—that Frances, entirely occupied with Rose and Blanche, only perceived the fire when she felt its warmth diffusing round, and heard the boiling water singing in the

coffee-po . This phenomenon — fire rekindling of itself—did not astonish Dagobert's wife then, so wholly was she taken up in devising how she could lodge the maidens; for Dagobert, as we have seen, had not given her notice of their arrival.

Suddenly a loud bark was heard three or four times at the door.

"Hallo! there's Spoilsport," said Dagobert, letting in his dog; "he wants to come in to brush acquaintance with the family too."

The dog came in with a bound, and in a second was quite at home. After having rubbed Dagobert's hand with his muzzle, he went in turns to greet Rose and Blanche, and also Frances and Agricola; but, seeing that they took but little notice of him, he perceived Mother Bunch, who stood apart, in an obscure corner of the room, and carrying out the popular saying, "the friends of our friends are our friends," he went and licked the hands of the young workwoman, who was just then forgotten by all. By a singular impulse, this action affected the girl to tears; she patted her long, thin, white hand several times on the head of the intelligent dog. Then, finding that she could be no longer useful (for she had done all the lit-

the services she deemed in her power), she took the handsome flower Agricola had given her, opened the door gently, and went away so discreetly that no one noticed her departure. After this exchange of mutual affection, Dagobert, his wife, and son, began to think of the realities of life.

"Poor Frances," said the soldier, glancing at Rose and Blanche, "you did not expect such a pretty surprise!"

"I am only sorry, my friend!" replied Frances, "that the daughters of General Simon will not have a better lodging than this poor room; for with Agricola's garret—"

"It composes our mansion," interrupted Dagobert; "there are handsomer, it must be confessed. But be at ease; these young ladies are drilled into not being hard to suit on that score. To-morrow, I and my boy will go arm and arm, and I'll answer for it he won't walk the more upright and straight of the two, and find out General Simon's father, at M. Hardy's factory, to talk about business."

"To-morrow, father," said Agricola to Dagobert, "you will not find at the factory either M. Hardy or Marshal Simon's father."

“What is that you say, my lad?” cried Dagobert, hastily, “the Marshal!”

“To be sure; since 1830, General Simon’s friends have secured him the title and rank which the emperor gave him at the battle of Ligny.”

“Indeed!” cried Dagobert, with emotion, “but that ought not to surprise me; for, after all, it is just; and when the emperor said a thing, the least they can do is to let it abide. But it goes all the same to my heart; it makes me jump again.”

Addressing the sisters, he said: “Do you hear that, my children? You arrive in Paris the daughters of a Duke and Marshal of France. One would hardly think it, indeed, to see you in this room, my poor little duchesses! But, patience; all will go well. Ah, Father Simon must have been very glad to hear that his son was restored to his rank! eh, my lad?”

“He told us he would renounce all kinds of ranks and titles to see his son again; for it was during the general’s absence that his friends obtained this act of justice. But they expect Marshal Simon every moment, for the last letters from India announced his departure.”

At these words Rose and Blanche looked

at each other; and their eyes filled with tears.

"Heaven be praised! These children rely on his return; but why shall we not find M. Hardy and Father Simon at the factory to-morrow?"

"Ten days ago they went to examine and study an English mill established in the south; but we expect them back every day."

"The deuce! that's vexing; I relied on seeing the general's father, to talk over some important matters with him. At any rate, they know where to write to him. So to-morrow you will let him know, my lad, that his granddaughters are arrived. In the meantime, children," added the soldier, to Rose and Blanche, "my good wife will give you her bed, and you must put up with the chances of war. Poor things! they will not be worse off here than they were on the journey."

"You know we shall always be well off with you and madame," said Rose.

"Besides, we only think of the pleasure of being at length in Paris, since here we are to find our father," added Blanche.

"That hope gives you patience, I know," said Dagobert, "but no matter! After all you have heard about it, you ought to be

finely surprised, my children. As yet, you have not found it the golden city of your dreams, by any means. But patience, patience; you'll find Paris not so bad as it looks."

"Besides," said Agricola, "I am sure the arrival of Marshal Simon in Paris will change it for you into a golden city."

"You are right, Agricola," said Rose, with a smile, "you have, indeed, guessed us."

"What! do you know my name?"

"Certainly, Agricola, we often talked about you with Dagobert, and latterly, too, with Gabriel," added Blanche.

"Gabriel!" cried Agricola and his mother, at the same time.

"Yes," replied Dagobert, making a sign of intelligence to the orphans, "we have lots to tell you for a fortnight to come; and, among other things, how we chanced to meet with Gabriel. All I can now say is that, in his way, he is quite as good as my boy (I shall never be tired of saying, 'my boy'); and they ought to love each other like brothers. Oh, my brave, brave wife!" said Dagobert, with emotion, "you did a good thing, poor as you were, taking the unfortunate child—and bringing him up with your own."

"Don't talk so much about it, my dear; it was such a simple thing."

"You are right; but I'll make you amends for it by-and-by. 'Tis down to your account; in the meantime, you will be sure to see him to-morrow morning."

"My dear brother arrived too!" cried the blacksmith; "who'll say, after this, that there are not days set apart for happiness? How came you to meet him, father?"

"I'll tell you all, by-and-by, about when and how we met Gabriel; for if you expect to sleep, you are mistaken. You'll give me half your room, and a fine chat we'll have. Spoilsport will stay outside of this door; he is accustomed to sleep at the children's door."

"Dear me, love, I think of nothing. But, at such a moment, if you and the young ladies wish to sup, Agricola will fetch something from the cookshop."

"What do you say, children?"

"No, thank you, Dagobert, we are not hungry; we are too happy."

"You will take a little wine and water, sweetened, nice and hot, to warm you a little, my dear young ladies," said Frances; "unfortunately, I have nothing else to offer you."

"You are right, Frances; the dear children are tired, and want to go to bed; while they do so, I'll go to my boy's room, and, before Rose and Blanche are awake, I will come down and converse with you, just to give Agricola a respite."

A knock was now heard at the door.

"It is good Mother Bunch come to see if we want her," said Agricola.

"But I think she was here when my husband came in," added Frances.

"Right, mother; and the good girl left lest she should be an intruder: she is so thoughtful. But no—no—it is not she who knocks so loud."

"Go and see who it is, then, Agricola."

Before the blacksmith could reach the door, a man, decently dressed, with a respectable air, entered the room, and glanced rapidly round, looking for a moment at Rose and Blanche.

"Allow me to observe, sir," said Agricola, "that after knocking you might have waited till the door was opened before you entered. Pray, what is your business?"

"Pray, excuse me, sir," said the man, very politely, and speaking slowly, perhaps to prolong his stay in the room: "I beg a thousand pardons—I regret my intrusion—I am ashamed—"

"Well, you ought to be, sir," said Agricola, with impatience, "what do you want?"

"Pray, sir, does not Miss Soliveau, a deformed needlewoman, live here?"

"No, sir; upstairs," said Agricola.

"Really, sir," cried the polite man, with low bows, "I am quite abroad at my blunder; I thought this was the room of that young person. I brought her proposals for work from a very respectable party."

"It is very late, sir," said Agricola, with surprise. "But that young person is as one of our family. Call to-morrow; you cannot see her to-night; she's gone to bed."

"Then, sir, I again beg you to excuse—"

"Enough, sir," said Agricola, taking a step toward the door.

"I hope madame and the young ladies, as well as this gent, will be assured that—"

"If you go on much longer making excuses, sir, you will have to excuse the length of your excuses; and it is time this came to an end!"

Rose and Blanche smiled at these words of Agricola; while Dagobert rubbed his mustache with pride.

“What wit the boy has!” said he aside to his wife. “But that does not astonish you—you are used to it.”

During this speech, the ceremonious person withdrew, having again directed a long, inquiring glance to the sisters, and to Agricola, and Dagobert

In a few minutes after, Frances having spread a mattress on the ground for herself, and put the whitest sheets on her bed for the orphans, assisted them to undress with maternal solicitude, Dagobert and Agricola having previously withdrawn to their garret. Just as the blacksmith, who preceded his father with a light, passed before the door of Mother Bunch’s room, the latter, half concealed in the shade, said to him rapidly, in a low tone:

“Agricola, great danger threatens you: I must speak to you.”

These words were uttered in so hasty and low a voice that Dagobert did not hear them; but as Agricola stopped suddenly, with a start, the old soldier said to him:

“Well, boy, what is it?”

“Nothing, father,” said the blacksmith, turning round; “I feared I did not light you well.”

“Oh, stand at ease about that; I have the legs and eyes of fifteen to-night;” and

the soldier, not noticing his son's surprise, went into the little room where they were both to pass the night.

On leaving the house, after his inquiries about Mother Bunch, the over-polite Paul Pry slunk along to the end of Brise-Miche Street. He advanced toward a hackney-coach drawn up on the Cloître Saint Mery Square.

In this carriage lounged Rodin, wrapped in a cloak.

"Well?" said he, in an inquiring tone.

"The two girls and the man with the gray mustache went directly to Frances Baudoin's; by listening at the door, I learned that the sisters will sleep with her, in that room, to-night; the old man with the gray mustache will share the young blacksmith's room."

"Very well," said Rodin.

"I did not dare insist on seeing the deformed workwoman this evening on the subject of the Bacchanal Queen; I intend returning to-morrow, to learn the effect of the letter she must have received this evening by the post about the young blacksmith."

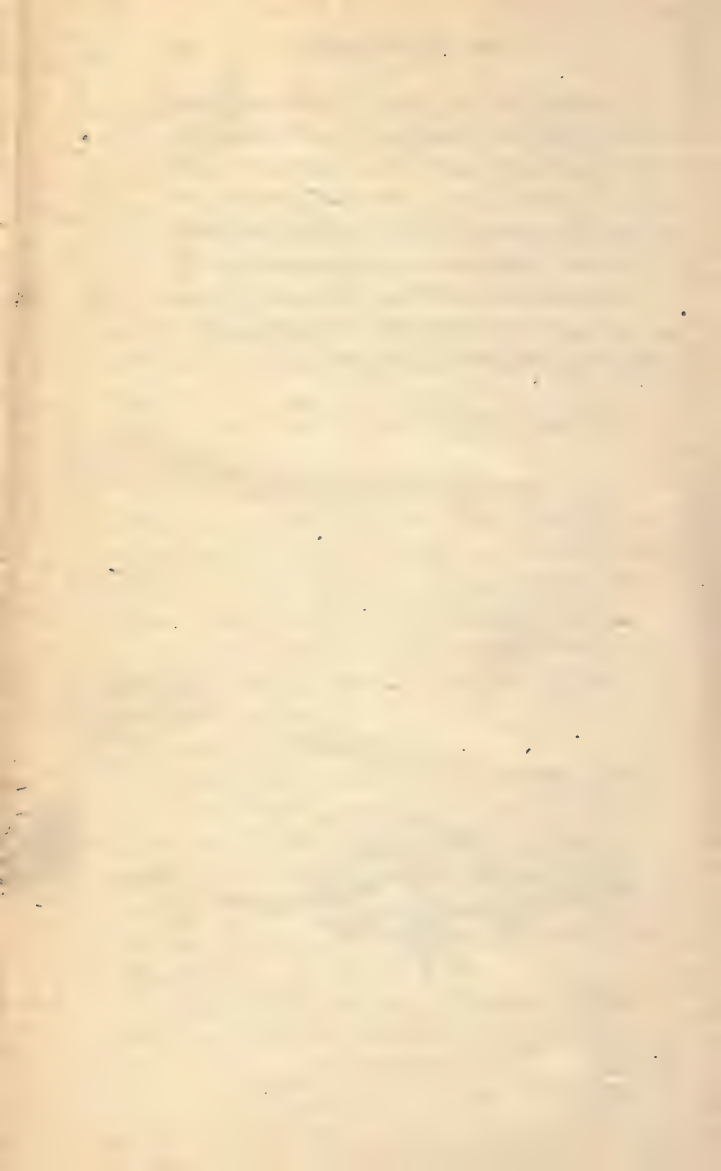
"Do not fail! And now you will call, for me, on Frances Baudoin's confessor,

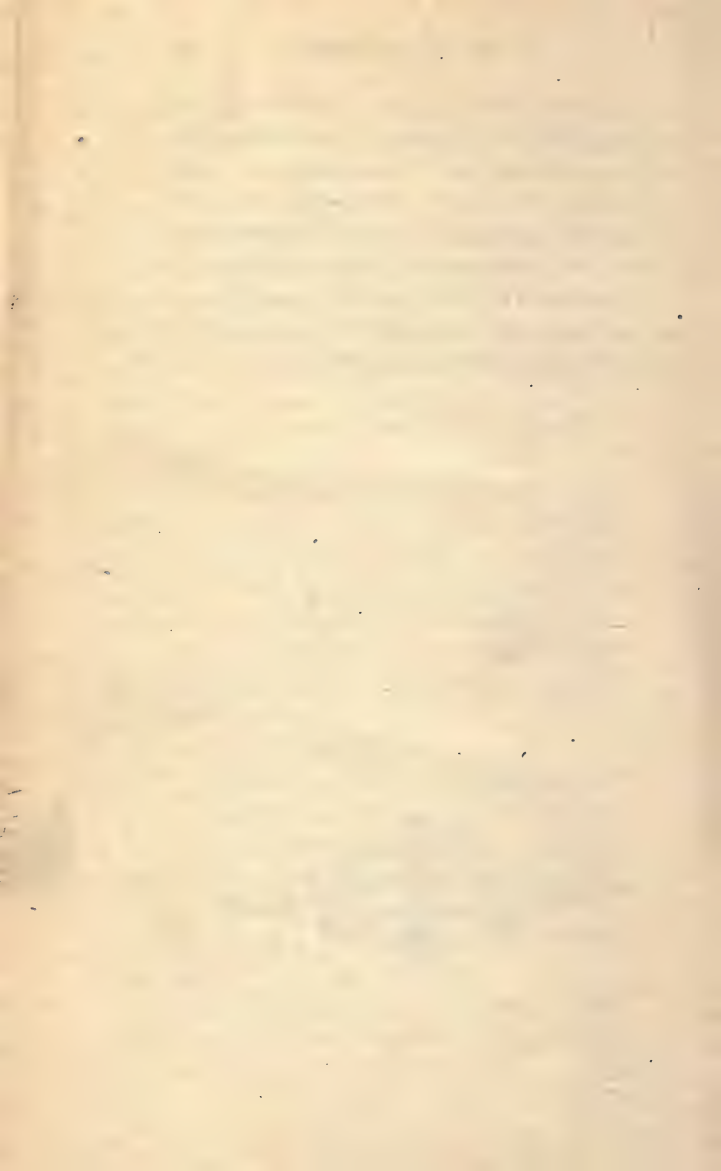
late as it is; you will tell him that I am waiting for him at Rue du Milieu des Ursins—he must not lose a moment. Do you come with him. Should I not be returned, he will wait for me. You will tell him it is on a matter of great moment.”

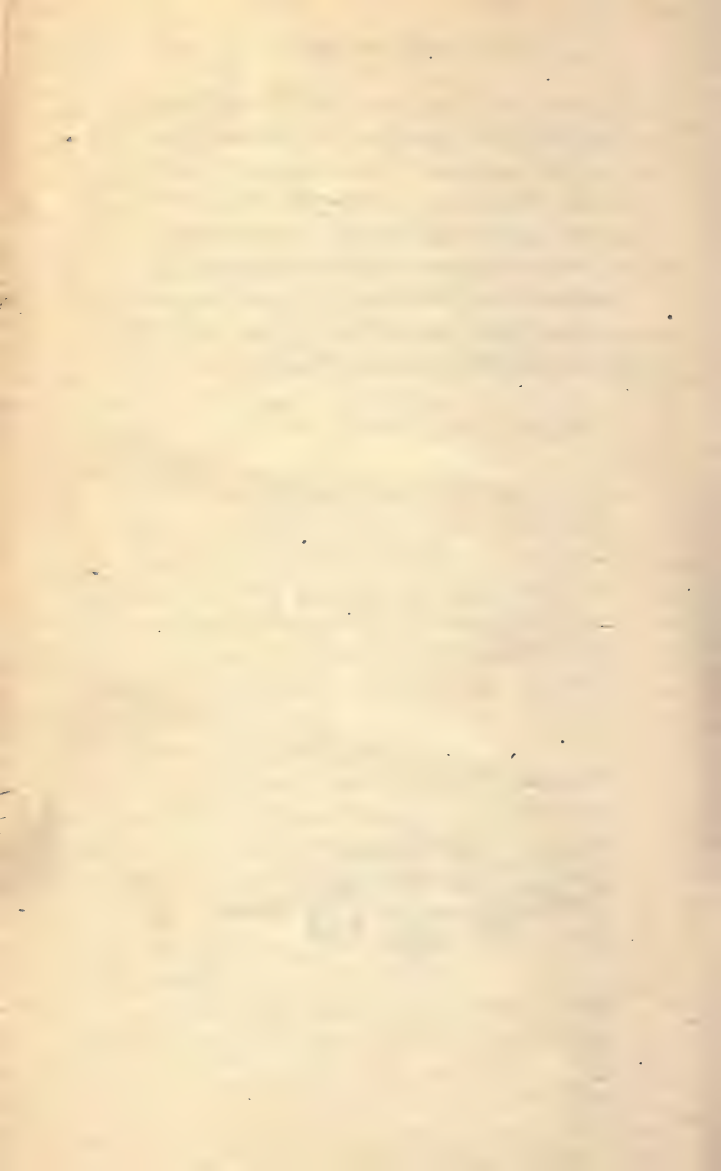
“All shall be faithfully executed,” said the ceremonious man, cringing to Rodin as the coach drove quickly away.

END OF VOLUME ONE.













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